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BIOGRAPHY

of the Signers to the DECLARATION of INDEPENDENCE

JOHN SANDERSON

VOL. IIII

GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
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BIOGRAPHY

OF THE SIGNERS TO THE

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

BY ROBERT WALN, Jr.

VOL. IV.

EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, to wit:

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the first day of May, in the forty-seventh year of the independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1823, R. W. POMEROY, of the said district, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as Proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

"*Biography of the Signers to the Declaration of Independence.—Vol. IV.*"

In conformity to the act of the congress of the United States, intituled "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned."—And also to the act, entitled, "An act supplementary to an act entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned," and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

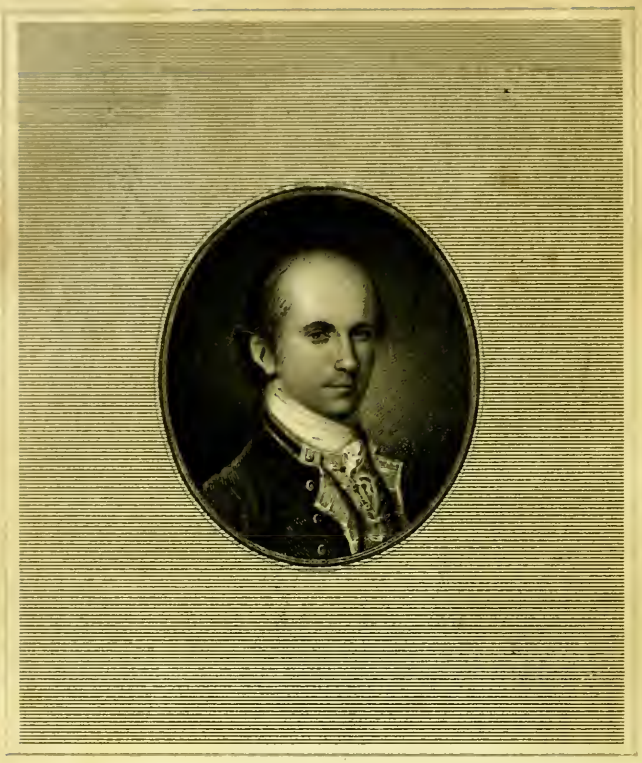
D. CALDWELL,

Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

CONTENTS.

	Page.
Thomas Heyward, - - - -	1
George Read, - - - -	19
William Williams, - - - -	85
Samuel Huntington, - - -	107
William Floyd, - - - -	129
George Walton, - - - -	151
George Clymer, - - - -	171
Benjamin Rush, - - - -	247

THOMAS HEYWARD.



THO^{S} HEYWARD JUN^{R}.

Engraved by J.B.Longacre from a Miniature

in the Possession of Mrs. Heyward.

HEYWARD.

As mathematicians, in demonstrating a general truth, employ a particular diagram, the life of THOMAS HEYWARD may be selected to illustrate the purity of design, the self-devotion, and the enlightened forecast of the patriots who achieved the independence of the United States of America.

Mr. Thomas Heyward, the eldest son of Colonel Daniel Heyward, of St. Luke's parish, in the province of South Carolina, was born in the year of our Lord 1746. His father, one of the wealthiest planters in the province, had acquired the greater part of his estate by his sagacity and industry. Though the maker of his own fortune, he did not think that money was every thing; and determined to bestow on his son a more valuable inheritance than the land and slaves which were to descend to him. His wisdom found its reward. By a good education, his son was enabled to render important

services to his country, and prepared for that station in the congress of the United States, which has connected the name of Heyward with one of the most memorable acts, not only in the history of the United States, but in that of human nature. Unenlightened by culture, the mind of young Heyward might have been directed to unworthy pursuits, and his wealth have ensnared, if not destroyed, his early virtue. He might have thought himself too rich to act a decided part in so momentous a controversy, and the fear of losing his inheritance, would thus have deprived his country of his valuable exertions, and have excluded him from the honours of patriotism. Nothing but an enlightened feeling, superior to ordinary calculation, could have induced him to brave the hazards of a revolution. No portion of the country had more to adventure than the southern section, and no limb of the union was more severely lacerated. Amid the devastations of estates, the labours, the contumely, the dangers, the imprisonment, and the exile, to which all the patriots were exposed, few encountered more privations and positive evils, than Thomas Heyward.

At an early age, young Heyward was placed at the best school in the province. The ancient languages were then diligently taught in the schools; and he acquired such a knowledge of Latin, as enabled

him to read the Roman historians and poets, and to imbibe their lessons of liberty. From school he was removed to the office of Mr. Parsons, a lawyer celebrated for his learning and dexterity.

In the pages of Blackstone he learned to reverence the English constitution, and especially its more valuable feature, the popular or representative branch. That all supplies to the crown must proceed from the people themselves, through their representatives, was a maxim of the English law which could hardly have escaped his attention, in his early reading. The sacredness of property in the estimation of the common law, was impressed upon him in every page. This principle, he found, was the parent of a voluminous code, and an intricate science. It apologized for the endless reports of cases, and relieved them of their tediousness. From his professional studies, he thus became necessarily familiar with those principles by which the colonial questions were afterwards to be settled.

After the usual term of study, he was, according to the course of education then prevalent, sent to England to be entered in one of the Inns of Court. It does not appear that he placed himself in a lawyer's office, to while away the period between youth and manhood, before he took possession of his estate. His expectations from his father might have

furnished him with a plea for indolence, or indifference, or only called forth a decent attention to his studies; but he valued his fortune only as it enabled him to strengthen and enlarge his mind, and to qualify himself for public pursuits. In the Temple, he therefore pursued his studies with the zeal which characterised their commencement, and emulated the diligence of those, who could look only to a profession for advancement. In England he found also an additional motive for exertion. If it was not there that he first learned the distinction between an Englishman and a colonist, it was there that he was most painfully wounded by it. Pride is a striking feature in the English character. Glorying in their country, they think they have a right to be proud, and they do not merely yield to the sentiment, but cherish it as ennobling. Now, however becoming this may appear to its votaries, it is seen in a less amiable light by its objects, and its victims. In the colonies, the people cherished the idea that they were of the English race, and endeavoured to associate themselves with the military, the civil, and the literary glory of England. The colonists read Shakspeare and Milton with the feelings of Englishmen. It was their ambition

> "That Chatham's language was their mother tongue,
> "And Wolf's great name compatriot with their own."

But in England the colonist was taught to be less aspiring. At every step he was met by some mortifying distinctions, which checked his presumption; and though the laws made no difference between the subjects of the crown, whether born at home or abroad, the pride of the English would not permit them to receive, as equals, a colonial race, unadorned by a nobility, and unsupported by hereditary wealth. In the intercourse of society, nothing makes a deeper impression on the youthful mind, or will be more keenly resented, than a contemptuous deportment. The practice which prevailed in the southern provinces, of completing the education of their youth in England, had not, therefore, the effect of binding faster the links which united the mother country and the colonies.

The mortifications to which our youth were often exposed in England, rather sent them home with alienated affections; and the sentiment that America could be nothing of herself, so long as she was dependent upon Europe, gradually gained ground. In all appointments, civil and military, for the colonies, an unwise government cherished rather than repressed these distinctions and jealousies. Places of confidence and profit were committed almost entirely to Europeans, and America was governed, not as an integral member of the British empire,

but as a dependent province, erected and administered only for the advantage of an insolent step-mother. This degradation was felt by all, but even the most enlightened, though sensible that there was something wrong in the relations of the two countries, knew not what was the remedy.

After completing his studies in the Middle Temple, Mr. Heyward set out upon his travels. Several years were spent in visiting different countries on the continent of Europe. Nor was his tour unprofitable to him. He endeavoured to travel with the spirit of a patriot, that undazzled by the magnificence of Europe, he might preserve his heart true to America. With such feelings, he could not but compare the general industry, the moderate fortunes, the absence of extreme poverty, the equality of ranks, the simple style of living, and the domestic felicity in America, with the bloated wealth, the aristocratic pride, the pauperism, the luxury, and the licentiousness, which glared upon him from every direction, in Europe. He was not insensible of her advancement in science, letters, and arts, and the conveniences and elegancies of life; but he loved to turn his eyes towards those contrasts which would strengthen his attachment to the place of his birth, and the home of his affections.

Untainted by gay life, and contented with the

moderation of his own country, he returned from Europe. He brought back an understanding improved by books and men. Society and pleasure had not alienated him from his profession; and he, therefore, entered immediately upon the labours of the law. In 1773, he was united to Miss Mathews, a lady of an amiable temper, and a beautiful person. In her society, his affectionate dispositions were indulged and cherished. In the midst of his domestic enjoyments and professional advancement, the differences between England and the colonies, which had only been allowed to repose since 1764, were renewed. Mr. Heyward was no stranger to the principles which alone could reconcile them; nor would his zealous temper permit him to speculate merely on the questions in dispute. He could not be ignorant of the weight which his fortune, his education, and his profession, gave him in society; he, therefore, early associated himself with the venerable leaders of the revolution.

Uniting a fearless with an amiable temper, he soon became a favourite with the people. He was elected to the first revolutionary assembly in the province, and shortly after chosen a member of the council of safety, an office bestowed only on the determined and the prudent. Their powers were discretionary, and their duties grave and weighty. To

collect intelligence, to awe the disaffected, to direct the public mind, and to see that the youthful commonwealth suffered no injury, were services which demanded no small portion of wisdom and courage, ability and address.

Without such a machine, the revolution must have moved heavily along. His fidelity to this trust recommended him to higher honours. When, in 1775, on the expectation of an invasion, John Rutledge and Christopher Gadsden were recalled from congress to be employed at home in the defence of the state, Mr. Heyward was selected to supply one of the vacancies. His modesty led him to hesitate in accepting the appointment, and he only yielded to the wishes of a respectable delegation of citizens. He arrived at Philadelphia in time to attend in his place upon the discussion of American Independence; and found himself in the midst of that assembly of sages, whose sagacity and intrepidity had reminded a Chatham of the fathers of ancient Rome. Here he was daily enlightened and elevated by the mellow wisdom of Franklin, the indignant eloquence of Adams, and the aspiring genius of Jefferson.

America had before this been alienated from England, by unkindness and oppression: to cut asunder their ravelled ties, and to extinguish the last hope of reconciliation, was all that remained to be done.

To unite in that memorable instrument, in which the fruitless language of remonstrance gave way to an animated enumeration of our wrongs, and a calm but firm assertion of our rights, was one of the first duties that he was called upon to discharge.

In 1778, Mr. Heyward was elected a judge of the criminal and civil courts of the new government. It was not a place to flatter the ambition of a member of the congress of 1776, and Mr. Heyward's fortune placed him above pecuniary considerations. A sense of public duty alone induced him to take a judicial office, when it was yet undecided whether the judge might not be punished as a traitor. He was soon called to a painful exercise of his authority. While the British army lay in the neighbourhood of Charleston, he presided at the trial and condemnation of some persons charged with a treasonable correspondence, who were afterwards executed in sight of the enemy's lines. This rendered him obnoxious to the enemy, and in the capitulation of Charleston, it was thought that he was intended to be excluded from its benefits, by the article which excepted those, who, under the mock forms of justice, had been instrumental in putting to death his majesty's good and loyal subjects.

Though appointed a judge, he still held a commission in the militia; and, in the affair at Beaufort,

commanded a company of the Charleston Ancient Battalion of Artillery. This corps was raised in the province, in the time of governor Littleton, and had served under him in his expedition against the Creeks.

General Moultrie now commanded at Beaufort a mixed force of regulars and militia; and of the latter, the most efficient member was the Charleston Artillery, a disciplined battalion animated by the recollection of past services and fame. Their courage and skill could not have been placed under a safer direction, for their two captains, Rutledge and Heyward, if they had not a military reputation to sustain, were now to support with their blood that cause which had so often animated the eloquence of the one, and inspired the self-devotion of the other. The presence of two of the most distinguished patriots in the state, members of that celebrated congress which had given independence to their country, also imparted interest and dignity to the scene. To the artillery was ascribed the success of the day; nor was Mr. Heyward without a trophy of victory, in the wound which he received from a musket ball. In the disastrous attack upon Savannah, this corps had their share of suffering and loss. When Charleston was besieged, he had attained to the command of the battalion, whose steadiness and skill during the tedious operations of the enemy, ri-

valled that of the veterans of the line. With the fall of the town, he became a prisoner of war. If fear or despondency could have overcome him, he would have made his peace with the conquerors, and secured both his person and estate. But, though aware that if he allowed the day of mercy to pass away, he was one of those to whom no future clemency would be extended, he, with the bravest and best men in the country, adhered to the good old cause, and thought it even criminal to despair of the fortunes of the republic. This band of patriots were an odious and a dangerous spectacle. They reproached the fallen virtue of those who had sought the protection of the enemies of their country. Their heroism might yet arouse the sleeping patriotism of the timid and the desponding; and under their courage the discontented might one day rally. While any refused the oath of allegiance, the conquest of the province was incomplete. The lieutenant governor of the state, Christopher Gadsden, and all those who still considered themselves Americans, were therefore apprehended. From among these, the leaders of the revolution were selected to be transported to Augustine, while the younger patriots were confined, in the prison ships in the harbour of Charleston. Judge Heyward was among the former. His spirit was to be broken neither by

exile nor threats. Even his cheerfulness was superior to misfortune, and to the music of "God save the king," he adapted the words of "God save the States," a song now popular on festive occasions, that under a loyal tune the prisoners might give play to the feelings of patriotism. During his imprisonment, a party of the enemy from Augustine visited his plantation, and seized and carried away all his slaves. No interposition on the part of his friends was permitted, and the civil authority sanctioned this military plunder. The hatred to his name had nearly involved his brothers in a similar calamity; but their minority was at length permitted to except them from the devastation.

Though some of Mr. Heyward's slaves were afterwards reclaimed, one hundred and thirty of the number remained among the spoils of the enemy, and were probably transferred from the rice fields of Carolina to the sugar estates of Jamaica.

The prisoners at Augustine were at length released; but his ill fortune had not yet deserted him. On his passage to Philadelphia he fell overboard, and only escaped drowning by holding to the rudder of the ship until he was taken in. It was in Philadelphia that the exiles from Carolina were first assured that their state was reconquered, and independence secured.

But, as if infelicity was the lot of man, it was in the midst of the exultations of the patriot, that he was visited with the severest domestic affliction.

In him, public and private virtue were happily blended, and the patriot and the husband were sustained by the same sensibility. In his grief for the loss of the companion of his youth, and the mother of his children, every other feeling was now swallowed up. From this state of mind he slowly recovered, and gradually found tranquillity in the discharge of his public duties.

Upon his return to Carolina, he resumed the labours of the bench, and continued to act as a judge until 1798. He was, in 1790, appointed a member of the convention for forming a state constitution. In this dignified body, concentrating the experience, the ability, and the virtue, of the state, he contributed his part to secure what he had before assisted to advance, the liberty and independence of his country. He lived to see the states united under the federal constitution, and reverenced that instrument as the palladium of national power, prosperity, and glory. From public labours and cares, he withdrew himself in 1791, and found in retirement and the bosom of his family, the calmness of a virtuous old age. By a marriage in 1786, with Miss E. Savage, he had secured a companion for his retirement,

by whose superior understanding the cares of life were divided, and its vacuities supplied.

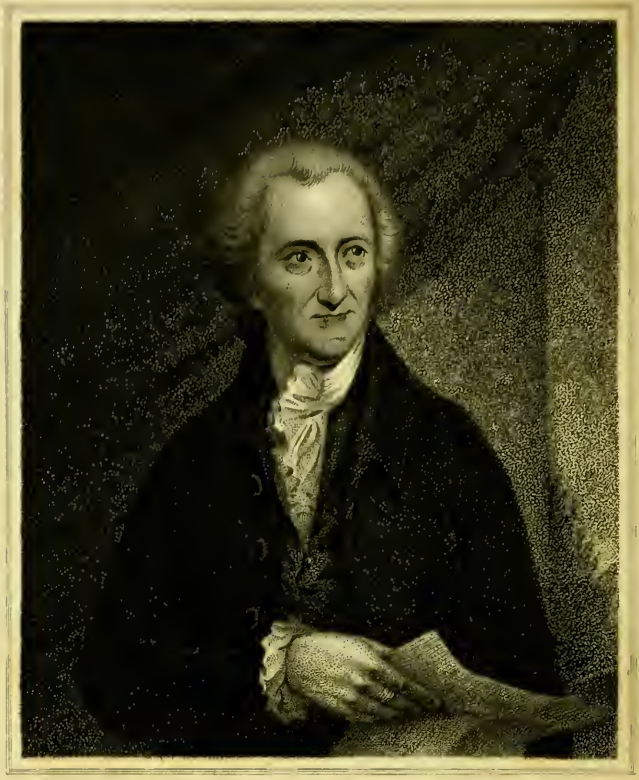
Three children were the fruits of this marriage; and it was in the midst of a family, whose tenderness had smoothed the path of his downward years, that he died at his country seat, in March, 1809.

Though of a grave temper, which was indicated by his countenance, he was not insensible to wit and pleasantry. In early life he was fond of company, from which he seems only to have been estranged by the afflictions and the cares which thickened upon him. His judgment was sound, and his disposition ardent. These are attested by the offices he filled, and the part that he bore in the revolution. His friendships, and the general esteem of his fellow citizens, furnish proofs of the goodness of his heart. In his public duties, he was honest, firm, and intelligent. He conscientiously and fearlessly embarked in the revolution. He was neither blind to its dangers, nor indifferent to its morality. His life, estate, and reputation, he cast upon the waters of strife. A successful revolution could confer no more on him than on the humblest of his countrymen. Though the prize was common, his stake was among the largest. Of such a character, a stranger to public virtue can scarcely form a conception; and

yet America produced thousands, in whom the promotion of the general weal was the predominating motive, who ventured upon the most desperate hazards under the influence of a patriotism which stifled every selfish consideration, nobly grasping at an assured freedom, and a national independence for themselves and their posterity.

The lesson they teach is the only preservative of freedom. It can neither be achieved nor maintained without patriotism. By revolving in our minds the actions of the patriots of the revolution, we cherish the principles of liberty. Their lives are public property, and should be embalmed for their posterity as the pabulum of PUBLIC VIRTUE.

GEORGE READ.



GEORGE READ

Engraved by J.B.Longacre from a Painting by ... Pine.

READ.

George Read was born in Cecil County, in the province of Maryland, in the year 1734, and was the eldest of six brothers. His father, John Read, was the son of a wealthy citizen of Dublin, and having emigrated to America, settled in Cecil County, where he became a respectable planter. Soon after the birth of his eldest son, he removed to Newcastle County, in the province of Delaware, and established himself on the head-waters of the Christiana river.

The parents of Mr. Read determined, at an early period, to confer such an education upon their son, as would enable him to pursue one of the learned professions. The small number of schools was, at that period, a serious obstacle to the dissemination of knowledge. The nearest reputable seminary to the residence of Mr. Read's parents, was at Chester, in the province of Pennsylvania, where he was

taught the rudiments of the learned languages. From this school he was removed to New London, in the same province, and placed under the care of the Reverend Doctor Allison, a man eminently qualified for the arduous task of imparting instruction to youth. Deeply versed in the learned languages, his mind was free from the alloy too often mingled with the pure gold of classic lore; he explored the mazes of science in solitary study, without being ignorant of the world; without despising the beauties of elegant literature, and without neglecting the decencies of society. His knowledge of human nature enabled him quickly to discern the bent of a pupil's genius, his master vice, and dominant foible.

Among the fellow-pupils of Mr. Read, were Charles Thompson, secretary of Congress, Hugh Williamson, a member of that body from North Carolina, and Doctor Ewing, Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, eminent as a mathematician and astronomer. The meeting of the first three of these distinguished men, must, under any circumstances, have been pleasing; but to meet, as it occurred in the present instance, in the first Congress of America, a body endued with Roman spirit, and Roman virtue,—in that illustrious assembly, surrounded by the guardians of the rights of three mil-

lions of their fellow men,—must have been to them a source of deep-felt gratification.

Mr. Read diligently pursued his studies under the care of Dr. Allison, until his seventeenth year, at which early age he was removed from school, and commenced the study of the law with John Moland, Esq., an eminent lawyer in the city of Philadelphia. An education terminated at so early a period of life, must necessarily have been incomplete; but the disadvantage of being forced into the world with a scanty stock of knowledge, was common to his contemporaries. Mr. Read actively applied himself to the study of his profession. It required more intense application at that period than at present, to qualify a young man for admission at the bar. The student was not then assisted by digests, abridgments, and excellent elementary treatises on every ramification of the law. The excessive toil which, at that day, was requisite for the attainment of legal knowledge, was best calculated to form habits on which were founded the most certain presages of eminence at the bar, and erudition on the bench. Hence Mr. Read was conspicuous in after-life for research and accuracy; the margins of almost every book in the extensive law library which he possessed, whilst living, are covered with his notes; so true is it, that the foundation of indus-

trious habits is always laid in early life. The confidence reposed by Mr. Moland in the abilities of his young student was so great, that long before the term of his studies had expired, he entrusted him with his docket, and confided to him all his attorney's business. Indeed, the talents, industry, and zeal, of Mr. Read, while in the office of Mr. Moland, generated an attachment towards his pupil, stronger and more permanent than the relation of lawyer and student usually produces.

In the year 1753, Mr. Read was admitted to the bar, at the early age of nineteen years. By the then existing laws of Maryland, and the three lower counties on Delaware, he was, as eldest son, entitled to two shares of his father's property. His first act, after his admission to the bar, was to relinquish by deed all claim upon his father's estate, generously assigning as the reason for this relinquishment, that he had received his full portion in the expenses incurred by his education, and that it would be a fraud upon his brothers not to renounce his legal right.

In the year 1754, he settled in Newcastle, and commenced the practice of the law, in the then three lower counties on Delaware, and the adjacent ones of Maryland. He found himself in the midst of powerful competitors,—men of great talents, and con-

summate lawyers;—among whom were John Ross, then attorney general, Benjamin Chew, George Ross, John Dickinson, and Thomas M'Kean. To have rapidly obtained full practice among such competitors, is, of itself, sufficient praise. On the 30th of April, 1763, he succeeded John Ross as attorney general for the three lower counties on Delaware. He was the first attorney general expressly appointed for these counties; as, before this period, the attorney general of Pennsylvania was the prosecuting officer in Delaware. Mr. Read held this office until he was elected a delegate to the congress of 1775; he then resigned it, declaring that he would not enter upon the arduous duties of a representative in that august body, trammelled with an office held from his Britannic Majesty.

Mr. Read was particularly eminent as a deep read lawyer; and he was powerfully versed in special pleading,—the logic of the law. His elocution was neither flowery nor rapid; on the contrary, he was somewhat slow in his speech, and negligent in his manner; but his profound legal knowledge, his solidity of judgment, and his habits of close and clear reasoning, gave him an influence with juries and judges, which the graces of the most finished oratory would have failed to impart. His conclusions were always founded on calm and cautious

deliberation, which seldom led him into error. His legal knowledge and judgment were so conspicuous, that his opinions were held in high and general estimation.

In the year 1763, Mr. Read married a daughter of the Reverend George Ross, who had been, during fifty years, pastor of Immanuel Church, in the town of Newcastle. It was one of his favourite maxims, that men ambitious of arriving at the acme of their professions, should never marry; but his good sense taught him that the sacrifice of domestic enjoyment would be inadequately compensated by the highest honours. The understanding of Mrs. Read, naturally strong, was carefully cultivated by her father, who bestowed more attention upon her instruction than it was the common lot of females, at that period, to receive. Her person was beautiful, her manners elegant, and her piety exemplary. During the revolutionary struggle, her trials were many and severe. The enemy, constantly on the maritime border of Delaware, kept the state in perpetual alarm by predatory incursions: the British army, at different periods, occupied parts of her territory, or marched through it. Frequent change of habitation was not one of the least evils which accompanied the war of the revolution. Mrs. Read was almost always separated from her husband,

who was unremittingly engaged in the public service. She was often compelled to fly from her abode, at a moment's warning, with a large and infant family. But she never was dejected; instead of increasing the heavy burden of a statesman's care by her complaints, she animated his fortitude by her firmness.

The domestic enjoyments of Mr. Read were soon interrupted by the contest which, in 1765, commenced between Great Britain and the colonies. As Mr. Read held an office under the British government, and possessed great and acknowledged influence, his adherence to the English ministers would, no doubt, have ensured him a share in the preferments and pecuniary rewards, lavishly bestowed upon those who supported the schemes of oppression which they had planned: but his patriotism and integrity induced him to take a decided part with those who opposed the aggressions of parliament, as soon as the disputes between the colonies and the mother country commenced. It was not vanity, but a proper estimate of his own abilities, and the knowledge that they were duly appreciated by his fellow-citizens, which assured him that he would be called upon to act an important part in the momentous drama, as soon as his sentiments became known. He well knew that the post

of leader, whether civil or military, was at once the post of danger and the place of honour. Success was problematical, and he could not doubt that the British ministers, embittered by opposition, and flushed by victory, would single out as victims, those who had been most active and influential in opposing their designs. Clemency was little to be expected where vengeance could be exercised under the guise of policy. But neither interest, nor fear, could divert him from taking the course which he believed to be right, and, once taken, "inflexible in faith," he never swerved from it.

In October, 1765, he took his seat in the general assembly of Delaware, as one of the representatives from Newcastle county, which station he continued to occupy during the twelve ensuing years. Mr. Read was one of the committees which reported the numerous addresses made to George the Third by the Delaware legislature, on behalf of their constituents: these addresses merit the encomiums so deservedly bestowed upon our revolutionary state-papers.

The fears, created by the very preamble of the statute repealing the stamp tax, that the favourite scheme of raising a revenue from America, was not abandoned, were speedily and sorrowfully confirmed. The act of parliament imposing duties in the

colonies, on tea, paper, painter's colours, and glass, passed in 1767, excited anew the apprehensions of the colonists, and compelled them to adopt the same measures to render it inoperative, by which they had endeavoured to defeat the stamp act.

An agreement among the colonists not to import from the mother country, was the measure best calculated to extort from her a redress of grievances: it wounded her in the most vulnerable point; for it was injurious to all, while it was ruinous to many, of her merchants. It was impossible to convince the British cabinet that the Americans were earnest in their opposition, unless they tested their sincerity by subjecting themselves to some great privations. In the early stages of the dispute, a redress of grievances was certainly their ultimate object: if any views of independence had existed, the non-importation agreements would have been preposterous, for they undoubtedly had the unfortunate effect of augmenting the greatest evil which tried the virtues of our forefathers during the revolutionary contest,—scarcity of arms, ammunition, and clothing.

The following is an extract from a circular letter, addressed by Mr. Read to his fellow-citizens in the lower part of Newcastle county: it explains the reasons which caused the inhabitants of Dela-

ware to enter into a non-importation agreement at a later period than their brother colonists:

"In the present struggle made for liberty by the colonies around us, I hope this government will not be pointed at as unconcerned in the common cause. Hitherto, the representatives of the people in assembly, have contributed their mite with other bodies of the like kind, through the continent; it is now become more particularly the business of the people in general to consider their present situation, and what may be further done in support of measures apparently necessary; I mean the non-importation agreements entered into, from time to time, since the late act of parliament imposing duties on tea, paper, glass, and painter's colours. From our local circumstances, it seemed unnecessary for the people of this government to enter into resolutions of non-importation from the mother country, as we had no traders among us who imported goods from Great Britain, except in very small quantities, and in vessels belonging to Philadelphia, which was sufficiently guarded by the agreement of her own citizens. Lately it has been discovered that a few of the traders of that city have become tired of what they call virtuous attempts to restore freedom to America, and endeavoured to dissolve the Philadelphia non-importa-

tion agreement. One of the principal arguments made use of, is the probability of losing the trade of this government. They say that the Maryland non-importation agreement, having excepted many more articles of merchandise than that of Philadelphia, the people here will form a connection with the Marylanders in the way of trade, introduced by going there to purchase such excepted articles, which trade may continue after all contests with the mother country are over. This is a plausible and forcible argument, and to remove all the weight it may have, the inhabitants of the upper parts of this county, particularly in and about the towns of Newcastle, Wilmington, Christiana, Newark, Newport, and Hamburg Landing, have resolved to support the Philadelphia agreement. It is now in the power of the people of this government to lend a helping hand, and be of real use to the general cause. Some of the people of New York have deserted it, but, it is thought, will be brought back to their duty. To prevent the like accident taking place at Philadelphia, we ought to destroy the argument alleged before. Let us be content to confine our trade to its former channels; there is our natural connection; let us forego some trifling conveniences in hopes of greater advantage; resolve not to purchase any goods out of the government

but such as are excepted in the Philadelphia agreement, and fall upon some effectual measures to support this conduct."

The agreement recommended by Mr. Read was soon very generally adopted. It was dated the 17th of August, 1769, and framed with much vigour and ability. After stating, in energetic language, the grievances which compelled them to co-operate with their fellow colonists in the measures best calculated to invite or enforce redress, they "mutually promise, declare, and agree, upon our word of honour, and the faith of Christians,"

"*First*, That from and after this date we will not import into any part of America any goods, wares, or merchandise, whatsoever, from any part of Great Britain, contrary to the spirit and intention of the agreement of the merchants of the city of Philadelphia.

"*Second*, That we never will have any dealing, commerce, or intercourse whatever, with any man residing in any part of the British dominions, who shall, for lucre or any other purpose, import into any part of America any article contrary to the said agreement.

"*Thirdly*, That any one of us who shall willfully break this agreement, shall have his name published in the public newspapers, as a betrayer of

the civil rights of Americans, and be forever after deemed infamous, and a betrayer of his country."

It is a curious fact, that no measure was devised for detecting violators of this agreement until a year after it had been formed: such was the confidence in the virtue of the community, that an infraction of the compact was little apprehended. But when the enthusiasm which gave animation and efficacy to this patriotic act, had in some measure subsided, owing to the privations to which it subjected those who had signed it, some individuals basely forfeited their word, their honour, and their christian faith, by violating the solemn pledge. Those who led the van of the covenant-breakers, were store-keepers; they had not, perhaps, less patriotism than other classes of their fellow-citizens, but their virtue was assailed by stronger temptations. Nor were they the only apostates; for if there were sellers of interdicted merchandise, there must also have been purchasers. To arrest this evil, which threatened the virtual dissolution of the compact, a system was devised as simple as it proved efficacious. On the 4th of June, 1770, Mr. Read expressed himself upon the subject in the following manner, in a letter addressed to one of his friends: "Several towns in this county have chosen two

committee-men each, to adopt such resolutions respecting trade as the present exigency seems to require. They met lately at Christiana, and were unanimously of opinion that the Philadelphia agreement should be supported; and for this purpose, two persons were appointed, in each town, a committee of inspection to *watch the trade.* The duty of these persons is to examine what goods are brought into this government, and in case they discover any sales by shop-keepers of articles not excepted, to report the same to the general committee, who shall determine what shall be done thereupon."

Mr. Read was elected chairman of this general committee. The subordinate committees performed their duty with so much diligence and activity, that they equalled the agents of the best organized police, in the discovery of delinquents. Every section of the county was subjected to a system of espionage, so inconsistent with American notions of liberty, that nothing but the urgency of the case, and the benefits which it produced, could have induced the citizens to tolerate it. The adherents of Great Britain were too small in number to shield the violators of the compact from its penalties. When information was given against them, they generally appeared before the general committee, who inflicted no other punishment than requiring

from the offender a public declaration of sorrow for the offence, a promise not to repeat it, and payment to the committee of the proceeds of sales of non-excepted articles, for the use of the poor of the county. The delinquents, however, were few in number.

At a meeting of the inhabitants of Newcastle county, on the 29th of June, 1774, Mr. Read was appointed, with twelve other persons, to conduct a subscription for the relief of the poor inhabitants of Boston, who were deprived of the usual means of subsistence by the act of parliament commonly called the Boston port bill. The people eagerly adopted this mode of manifesting their abhorrence of a cruel and ineffectual act of despotism, and their sympathy with those whom it reduced to want. By pecuniary sacrifices for their relief, they, in some measure, made themselves partakers of their sufferings, and their patriotism. In February, 1775, Mr. Read, who had been appointed, in conjunction with Nicholas Van Dyke, Esq., to receive the donations, remitted nine hundred dollars to the Boston committee, being the amount of subscriptions in Newcastle county. The notification to the committee at Boston occasioned the following letter from Samuel Adams to Mr. Read:

Boston, February 24th, 1775.

Sir,—

By your letter of the 6th instant, directed to Mr. David Jeffries, the committee of this town, appointed to receive and distribute the donations made for the relief and employment of the sufferers under the Boston port bill, are informed that a very generous collection has been made by the inhabitants of the county of Newcastle, on Delaware, and that there is in your hands upwards of nine hundred dollars for that charitable purpose. The care you have taken, with our worthy friend Nicholas Van Dyke, Esq., in receiving these contributions, and your joint endeavours to have them remitted in the safest and most easy manner, are gratefully acknowleged by our committee; and they have directed me to request that you would return their sincere thanks to the people of Newcastle, for their great liberality towards their fellow-subjects in this place, who are still suffering under the hand of oppression and tyranny.

It will, I dare say, afford you abundant satisfaction to be informed that the inhabitants of this place, with the exception of a contemptible few, appear to be animated with *an inextinguishable love of liberty*. Having the approbation of all the sister colonies, and being thus supported by their generous

benefactions, they endure the most severe trials with a manly fortitude, which disappoints and perplexes our common enemies. While a great continent is thus anxious for them, and administering to their relief, they can smile with contempt at the feeble efforts of the British administration to force them to submit to tyranny, by depriving them of the usual means of subsistence. The people of this province behold with indignation a lawless army posted in their capital, with the professed design to overturn their free constitution. They restrain their just resentment, in hopes that the most happy effects will result from the united applications of the colonies for their relief.

May heaven grant that the counsels of our sovereign may be guided by wisdom, that the liberties of America may be established, and harmony be restored between the subjects in Britain and her colonies.

I am, Sir,
Your sincere friend,
And fellow countryman,
SAMUEL ADAMS.

P. S. The committee have a prospect of negociating this matter with a friend in Philadelphia.

George Read, Esquire.

On the first of August, 1774, Mr. Read was elected by the general assembly of Delaware, together with Cæsar Rodney, and Thomas M'Kean, Esquires, to represent that state in the American congress, which met in the month of September, in Philadelphia. Mr. Read represented the state of Delaware in congress during the whole revolutionary war, excepting a short interval, when, by virtue of his office of vice president, he acted as her chief magistrate, in consequence of the capture of president M'Kinley immediately after the battle of Brandywine.

In the year 1775, the decisive appeal to arms was made. While Mr. Read, in conjunction with the sages of congress, was giving tone and direction to the ardour of our armies, two of his family were asserting the liberty of their country in the field;—colonel Read, who was lately gathered to his fathers in a venerable old age; and colonel, afterwards general, Thompson, who had married the sister of Mrs. Read. The following letter from general Thompson, who, at the head of the first rifle regiment raised in Pennsylvania, joined the American army besieging Boston, indicates the sprightly courage of the Irishman, while it exhibits, in pleasing characters, the naïveté of the soldier:

Camp on Prospect Hill, Sept. 19th, 1775.

DEAR BROTHER,

I would have written to you before this time, but was prevented by being very much hurried when I first came here, and I knew you had accounts at large every day from people here, who had much more time to write.

I am fixed at present on the most beautiful spot of ground in the world, as I can see from the door of my tent, all our well regulated army, from Roxbury to Winter Hill, and at the same time look down on the enemies of our country, confined within the narrow bounds of Boston and Bunker Hill; and further you may depend they shall not pass, had they lord North and all the troops in the pay of Great Britain to assist them.

Our troops are well supplied, and in high spirits, and long much to come to action, but I am doubtful we shall have but little to do in the fighting way in this quarter, this campaign.

I am very happy in all my commanding officers. I always had a high esteem for the commander-in-chief, and higher now than ever. I am every day more pleased with general Lee; our country owes much to him, and happy we are that a man of his great knowledge assists in the command of our army.

They have appointed me the second colonel in the continental army; and colonel Fry, who is the first, does the duty of brigadier general, so that if my friends take care for me, I may soon be promoted in the continental or provincial congress. There are a great many colonels in the family;—do make me a general.

All the news is cannonading and a few bombs:—the most harmless sport in life:—indeed, I have seen more mischief done by throwing the same number of snow-balls; but, don't tell cousin Gurney so, for if you do, he will bring over the poor devils he killed in Germany last war, to show that people have been put to death by cannons in other parts of the world, though the Americans are proof against them.

Let me hear from you: my best compliments wait on Mrs. Read, your dear little ones, and all friends, and believe me, dear George,

Your very affectionate brother,

WILLIAM THOMPSON.(*a*)

The momentous subject of independence, which occupied the attention of congress early in 1776, did not prevent Mr. Read from taking an active part in the affairs of his state. Whenever it was

(*a*) See note A.

practicable to leave with propriety his post in congress, he repaired to Delaware, not to enjoy in the bosom of his family the repose he so much needed, and a respite from his patriotic toils, but to employ his talents and his influence wherever they could prove most serviceable to the state. The American senator did not disdain the duties of a member of the committee of safety, and, in the year 1775, he shouldered his musket in the ranks of the militia, refusing the highest commission, which he was urged to accept.

In the month of May, 1776, Mr. Read was one among the multitude of his fellow-citizens who witnessed the attack made by the row-gallies upon the Roebuck and Liverpool frigates, off the mouth of Christiana creek: the following letter contains some particulars of that affair:

Wilmington, Friday, May 10th, 1776.

GENTLEMEN,—

The enclosed letter came to hand this evening, by the person employed to take the two hundred pounds of lead to Lewistown, sent by brigadier M'Kinley, upon the requisition of colonel Moore, which you have seen.

The committee of safety have thought it highly necessary that you should be acquainted with the

situation of the magazine at Lewistown, to exert your influence for an immediate supply of powder and lead, which, I suppose, must be by land, as the Roebuck and Liverpool will probably continue as high up the river as Reedy Island; this morning they are in the bite below Newcastle, and though the row-gallies have proceeded down from Christiana creek's mouth, about two hours ago, I am apprehensive the high wind now blowing, will not permit their acting to advantage in that cove.

We have had warm cannonading between the ships and gallies these two days past, all within our view. Great intrepidity was shown on the part of our people, who compelled the two ships to retire, not much to their credit; but it appeared to me the ships were afraid the gallies would get below them. Young captain Houston led the van. As to other particulars, I must refer you to some of the very many spectators from your city, who will have returned before this time.

I suppose it will be thought that too much powder and shot have been expended by the gallies in these attacks, but I am well satisfied they have produced a very happy effect upon the multitudes of spectators on each side of the river; and in that part of the colonies where the relation shall be known, British ships of war will not be thought so

formidable. A few long boats drove, and apparently injured, those sized ships that seemed best calculated to distress us.

The committee of safety are going this morning to Newcastle, and downwards, to see what may be necessary to advise for the protection of the shore below. Truly the people at large have shown great alacrity and willingness on this occasion. I know not when I shall be with you, as I may be of some little use here. I shall stay till there is some alteration in the appearance of things. Excuse this scroll. My compliments to all friends.

I remain,

Your very humble servant,

GEO. READ.

The Honourable Cæsar Rodney,
and Thomas M'Kean.

Young Houston, who so gallantly led the van in the battle of the row-gallies, was a native of Philadelphia: he was a handsome man, of polished and agreeable manners, and much admired in female society.

We are informed by a venerable revolutionary naval officer, that he was captured, three days after the battle, by the Liverpool, captain Boileau, who was a native of Scotland. This officer related to

our informant, that, in the hottest of the fight, a row-boat came from the shore, manned with four boys, who placed themselves directly under the stern of his ship, and fired incessantly into her. His officer of marines, calling his attention to these juvenile assailants, exclaimed, "Captain, do you see those d——d young rebels?—shall we fire upon them?"—"No—no"—cried the brave old Boileau, "don't hurt the boys; *let them break the cabin windows.*"

In the heat of the engagement, the attention of many among the innumerable spectators who lined the shores of the Delaware, was diverted from the novel spectacle of a naval combat, by a militia major, who rode at full speed among them, threw himself from his horse, which he let loose among the crowd, and entreated to be put on board of one of the gallies. With much difficulty, he persuaded two men to put off in a boat with him. He steered directly for the galley nearest the enemy, and, as soon as he reached her deck, stationed himself at a gun. The cartridges failed:—cartridge paper was called for to make a supply, but it was all expended:—the gallant major instantly pulled off his boots, cut off their feet, filled them with powder, and rammed them into his gun. When he returned home,

he boasted that he had not only been in the engagement, but had *fired his boots at the enemy.*

In July, 1776, Mr. Read signed the Declaration of Independence. Whatever diversity of opinion may have existed in relation to the time of adopting this measure, the strictest union was preserved when its immediate necessity was impressed upon the minds of the minority. The glory of the enterprise in which they had embarked, appeared the same to all, and all regarded independence as the only security of peace and liberty. With them, peace and liberty were indissolubly connected; "et nomen pacis dulce est, et ipsa res salutaris: sed inter pacem et servitutem plurimum interest: pax est tranquilla libertas, servitus malorum omnium postremum; non modo bello, sed morte etiam repellendum."* Such were the sentiments of our forefathers, and, in the fruits of their wisdom, we enjoy the repose of liberty, and they have merited and obtained a high and noble station among the heroes and patriots of the world.

Soon after the Declaration of Independence, Joseph Galloway observed to Mr. Read that he had

* Cicero. Oratio in M. Antonium. 652. The very name of peace is sweet, and is in itself a blessing; yet who would confound peace and slavery? Peace is the repose of liberty; slavery the worst of ills;—worse than war, or death itself.

signed it with a halter about his neck: Mr. Read replied that it was a measure demanded by the crisis, and he was prepared to meet any consequences that might ensue.

In September, 1776, he was president of the convention which formed the first constitution of Delaware. In the autumn of 1777, he was compelled to assume the arduous and responsible duties of chief magistrate of the state, in consequence of the capture of president M'Kinley by a detachment of British troops, immediately after the battle of Brandywine. The first presidency of the state had been offered for his acceptance, but he declined the honour.

At the time of Mr. M'Kinley's capture, Mr. Read was at Philadelphia, assisting in the deliberations of congress. He left that city as the British army entered it, and while returning to Delaware for the purpose of assuming the presidency, thus forced upon him, he narrowly escaped the misfortune which had befallen president M'Kinley. It was impracticable to pass from Philadelphia to Delaware on the western side of the river, as the British occupied the whole pass into the peninsula. Necessity, therefore, compelled him to proceed along the Jersey shore of the river, and brave the risk of crossing it, although almost covered with

the ships of the enemy. On the 13th of October, 1777, Mr. Read arrived at Salem, in New Jersey, and procured a boat to convey himself and family across the Delaware, there about five miles wide. At this time, there were several British men-of-war lying at anchor off Newcastle. When the boat had almost attained the Delaware shore, she was descried by the enemy, who immediately despatched an armed barge in pursuit of her. The tide being, unfortunately, low, the boat grounded so far from the beach that it was impossible for Mr. Read to land with his family before their pursuers arrived. There was only time to efface every mark on the baggage which could excite any suspicion that Mr. Read was not, as he represented himself, a country gentleman, returning to his home. The officer who commanded the boat was of no higher rank than that of boatswain; and the presence of Mr. Read's mother, wife, and infant children, gave sufficient probability to his story to deceive sailors, who, like all thoughtless persons, are little prone to suspect deception. The honest hearted fellows assisted with great good humour in landing the baggage, and carrying the ladies and children on shore.

The nice balance of political power which our constitution has so admirably adjusted between the

general and state governments, was not, in the day of revolution, regarded: hence Mr. Read was, at that time, a delegate in congress, as well as vice president of the state of Delaware.

The duty which the subject of our memoir was now called upon to perform, was most arduous. The situation of affairs, in general, was gloomy. These were, indeed, in the classic language of the revolution, the times that tried men's souls: the battle of Brandywine had been lost; the British had entered Philadelphia; the battle of Germantown followed; the fathers of our country were at York; and our brave countrymen in arms, naked and houseless, were exposed to the storms of winter at the Valley Forge. No consolation could be derived by Mr. Read, from a view of the state of things in his more peculiar department:—Sussex county was but slowly recovering from the intestine war which foreign emissaries had kindled among her deluded inhabitants, and obstinate men of opposite opinions as to the expediency of laws, chose to obey such only as they thought proper. Yet, under these discouraging circumstances, the firmness of Mr. Read remained unshaken, and he employed every means which his abilities and influence afforded, to conciliate or destroy the discordant opin-

ions that threatened to become so inimical to the welfare of the state.

Mr. Read evinced great solicitude in relation to president M'Kinley, then in the hands of the enemy, and made every exertion to ascertain his situation, provide for his wants, and procure his exchange. He solicited the interference of the commander-in-chief, and at length addressed a communication to commodore Griffith of the Solebay, in which vessel Mr. M'Kinley was confined, for the purpose of ascertaining his wants, and requesting such indulgences and kind treatment as his high character demanded.

On the 25th of November, 1777, Mr. Read received the following letter from general Washington:

Head Quarters, November 8th, 1777.

Sir,

Your favour of the 5th instant, enclosing a copy of a letter from you to general Smallwood, dated the 26th ulto., and the substance of his answer, did not reach me till the day before yesterday. It gives me great concern to find that the legislature of your state has not taken timely and effectual means for completing the battalion belonging to it. However desirable the mode of voluntary enlist-

ments might be, if it offered any adequate prospect of success, our circumstances evidently demand measures of more prompt and certain execution: it is incumbent, therefore, upon your legislative body, as a duty which they owe both to their own state and the continent at large, to pursue with energy the method of draughting which has been successfully practised in other states; indeed, I expect that you will shortly be called upon by congress for this purpose.

The property of the clothing taken in the prize sloop, will, I presume, be determined by certain resolutions of congress, copies of which were sent to general Smallwood, in order to settle a dispute of a similar nature: but, however this matter be decided, you ought undoubtedly to secure a sufficient quantity of this necessary article, to supply the wants of the Delaware battalion.

I am totally ignorant of any interruption having been given by the military, to the election of representatives in your state: it is much to be lamented that, at a season when our affairs demand the most perfect harmony and greatest vigour in all public proceedings, there should be any languor occasioned by divisions. Your efforts cannot be better employed than in conciliating the discordant parties, and restoring union.

The complaints against the commissaries of purchases, I fear are too well founded: such orders shall be given to the principal of the department for this district, as will, I hope, in some degree, remedy the evils complained of.

I have the honour to be,
With great respect, Sir,
Your most obedt. servt.,
G. WASHINGTON.

The Hon. George Read.

To this communication, Mr. Read, now president, pro tempore, of the state, returned the following answer:

SIR,

I was honoured by yours of the 8th instant, delivered to me on the 15th, by colonel Pope, by whom I immediately wrote to persons in authority in the counties of Kent and Sussex, to give him every assistance in procuring clothing and blankets for the use of our battalion with you.(*b*) I know not what may be the success, but have hopes that sufficient for their immediate use will be obtained. The state had made some provision in this way, at the time of raising the battalion in the beginning of

(*b*) See note B.

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the year, a part of which was then only expended, but upon the march of general Howe's army through this county, the greater part of what remained was sent by a person in whose custody it was, with his own effects, in a vessel, into Manto creek, in the Jersies, near to Red Bank fort, where it is at present safe. I know it consisted of 350 yards of cloth, of different kinds, the gleanings of very many stores. I, luckily, laid my hands upon 150 yards of linen of the public stores, saved from the enemy's searches in Wilmington, which is made into shirts, ready for colonel Pope on his return.

The county of Newcastle has heretofore been so stript of clothing, that we have not a sufficiency for the few militia we have now in service, guarding the shore of the Delaware. The manufacture of this state ever was inconsiderable in proportion to the number of its inhabitants, they depending, principally, on foreign goods purchased at Philadelphia. That part of the state which contributed most in this way, was severely pillaged by general Howe's army, both of clothing and sheep, so that their distress is great at this season.

To give you some idea of the amazing price necessaries have risen to, a man next door to me has just purchased a little American made linen for family use, at fifty-eight shillings per yard, such as

but three years since, sold for four shillings. I have a tanner's bill for leather now before me, in which soal-leather is charged at ten shillings per pound, two calf-skins at seventy shillings each, and a third at ninety;—the three not weighing six pounds. Shoes are selling from six to eight dollars per pair. How to remedy these things, I know not; they make unfavourable impressions.

I have the satisfaction to inform you that we have put an almost entire stop to the intercourse which was had with the enemy's ships, since they came into our river. This requires all the militia that we can procure, as we have a water communication of more than one hundred and twenty miles in our front, and too many of our people disposed to supply themselves with salt, sugar, and coffee, at lower rates than those at which they can be had in the state.

We have been peculiarly unlucky in the capture of our president, our public papers, money, and records. This disaster damped the spirits of our people; they have not got over the effects of it. While on this subject, I must entreat your excellency's attention to procuring our president's release, by exchange, as soon as it may be in your power. His usefulness was such that his loss is severely felt through the state, and particularly by

myself, upon whom the office of president devolves, as speaker of the legislative council. I am truly inadequate to either station, but especially to that of vice president. Be assured that in procuring his speedy return here, you will do a signal service to the state, as well as to

Your Excellency's

Most obedient servant,

GEORGE READ.

In the commencement of the year 1778, a correspondence took place between the honourable Thomas M'Kean, and Mr. Read, which is highly valuable: it introduces us, as it were, into the more private scenes of the olden time; it exhibits to us two men of strong and original minds, the one characterised by excessive ardour, and the other by cool and dignified circumspection, whose united object was the liberty and prosperity of their country.

York, February 10th, 1778.

SIR,

Your favour of the 29th of December did not reach me until the 24th of January, when duly reflecting upon every circumstance, I thought it my duty to come here, though, I confess, I am almost

tired of serving my country so much at my own expense. I left home the 29th of last month, and went into congress next morning, where I found only nine states represented, and, including myself, but eighteen members, though five, now at the camp, and some others, are expected in a few days: I hope general Rodney and major Van Dyke will come as soon as possible, but don't tell them that I lived at a little Dutch tavern, at an enormous expense, before I could get lodgings, and that I still am on sufferance.

The situation of Delaware gives me constant anxiety. The choice of representatives in October '76, and *their* choice of officers, have occasioned all its misfortunes. Nothing but effectual laws, vigorously executed, can save it; and there seems to me not the least prospect of the former; and when I learn that not a single step has been taken towards collecting the fines under the present inadequate militia law, or to punish the most impudent traitors, or even the harbourers of deserters, I despair of any law, tending to support the freedom, independence, and sovereignty of the state, being executed, especially in Kent and Sussex. The conduct of the general assembly, in having neither imposed a tax for reducing the paper bills of credit, nor passed laws necessary even in times of pro-

found peace, much less for completing their quota of troops, putting their militia on a respectable footing, &c. &c., is too conspicuous not to cause the disagreeable animadversions I am obliged continually to hear. However, I must drop the subject.

I shall endeavour to procure the account against the state from the auditor general, as soon as possible. The votes of Congress since January 1st, 1776, printed by Aitkin, are not yet come to hand, though they have been sent out of Philadelphia. I shall send you all that can be got, not knowing to what time they have been printed up.

Who can I propose in exchange for the president? Do inform me if you can think of any one. None occurs to me but governor Franklin, and hearing a gentleman say *that he could do more mischief than the president could do good*, I have little hopes of success from that proposition. I was told the other day, that he lodged at the widow Jenkins, along with his old friends ——— and ———, and seemed very happy. These observations, and others from different gentlemen, whenever I name him in private to any member, almost discourage me; however, after I hear from you, I shall attempt to have him released, lest it should be thought I was indifferent about the event, though

I could wish my colleagues to be present and assisting.

Notwithstanding all the diffidence you so modestly express of yourself, the state of Delaware thinks herself in happier, and I am sure she is in wiser, hands than those of your predecessor.

In answer to your favour, by your brother you will receive ten thousand dollars, to be expended in recruiting only, as congress have lately purchased clothing to a great amount at Boston, and the battalion will be furnished by the clothier-general. If more should be wanted, you will be pleased to write to me again, but I would advise that the recruiting-officers should first render you an account of this sum. No letter from general Smallwood has yet appeared in congress; when there does, I will attend to it.

The whole affair respecting the schooner,(*c*) in my opinion, rests with the judge of the admiralty in the first place, and must be decided upon by the resolves of congress, (there being none but what you have upon the subject), and the laws of England. An appeal lies to congress. The case is, undoubtedly, in favour of the state, and not the first possessor, whether wreck or derelict.

(*c*) See note C.

I have no news but what major Read can tell you, and shall therefore conclude with my best compliments to Mrs. Read.

Sir,

Your most obedient

And humble servant,

THOMAS M'KEAN.

Hon. George Read, Esquire.

Dover, March 4th, 1773.

SIR,

Your favour of the 12th ultimo was delivered to me by major Read, with ten thousand dollars for the recruiting service, which I immediately put into the hands of general Rodney to distribute among the officers now out on that business, who have orders to state their expenditures, and report them upon their next application for monies. You have enclosed a copy of some resolutions of the general assembly for the more speedy filling up of our battalion, by an addition of bounty, and a premium to the officers, in which I am authorized to apply to congress for a loan of forty thousand dollars. Such is the state of our funds, (which you well know), that this must be the mode of supply; therefore I request you to obtain that sum, and deliver it to the bearer, lieutenant William Fra-

zier, whom I send for the purpose: a less sum will not do, as much will be expended in the subsistence, and the expense of these special expresses is great. By report, some of the officers have had considerable success already, in recruiting in the whole about fifty men. Yet I cannot believe the number wanted will be made up in this way; the general assembly have thought otherwise, and would not consent to the mode of draughting, though warmly recommended by general Washington as the only probable and effectual way; and on this occasion, I am told members were very unanimous. A bill for holding an election in Sussex on the 2nd instant, being passed, the assembly adjourned over to this day. The situation of this state is much to be lamented, though I think you have heightened it in your colouring. I doubt all your intelligence respecting it is not well founded: bad we are, and too many affect to screen themselves by railing at what is, and what is not done, without contributing to a remedy;—for instance, as to the militia law. Not the warmest whig, or the most violent complainer of the times, (being an officer of the militia), has taken one step to carry any part thereof into execution, which will have this bad consequence, that much greater difficulties must attend the carrying any future law of the sort into exe-

cution, as well as a total loss of the fines under the present law, however inadequate, which by this time would have made a useful fund. A great mistake among many of us, has been to set at nought such acts of legislation as do not exactly tally with our sentiments: this has a fatal tendency at all times, but particularly at the present, making each individual a judge of what he ought, and what he ought not, to submit to. Not a single resolution of congress was transmitted to me since I came into the presidency, till the 10th ultimo, but the two you sent relating to the trade carried on by the disaffected, a want of representation in congress, and the appointment of a day of thanksgiving, though I wrote to the president of congress on the 25th November, for copies of such as this state ought, or were expected, to act upon; every public paper transmitted to president M'Kinley, being lost to us. Mr. President Laurens, (to whom I beg you to present my compliments and thanks), did at last obtain some copies from the secretary's office, which he enclosed with a line of the 30th January, by parson Montgomery, delivered to me on the 10th ultimo, as mentioned before; but he omitted a very essential one, the plan of confederacy, though he sent a copy of the recommendatory resolve to invest the delegates with power to assent thereto: for my own

part, I had not seen it till I accidentally laid my hands on a printed copy belonging to Cecil county, where my family are. Mentioning this, leads me to ask you what you think of some particular expressions therein; to wit; "provided also that no state shall be deprived of territory, for the benefit of the United States," in the last of the 2nd section, article 9th; and in the same article, section 4th, "regulating the trade, and managing all affairs, with the Indians not *members* of any of the states, provided that the legislative right of any state within its own limits, be not infringed or violated." In the 8th article, providing for a common treasury, in proportion to the value of all "land within each state, granted or surveyed for any person:" Quere; what ought to be the extent or limits of the territory of Virginia and Massachusetts, if not the absurd claim to the south sea, is it not necessary to be settled now? Quere: is it a practicable scheme to value the lands of the continent for taxation; if so, Quere: if the states who have known and very small limits, ought to have every foot of their land rated, for the protection of the ungranted lands in these boundless empires? Quere: if such a fund may not be formed in the boundless states, from the grants of lands, as will tend to diminish the present inhabitants of the other states by migrations there, and discourage

European settlers from fixing in the bounded states? Quere: if they may not prove dangerous to the liberties of America, from their extent and internal strength? I will not add to this list; these are terrifying to me, and sufficiently account for the speedy approbation, as published, from those two states; and, besides, I, with a multitude of others, have been taught to expect that all lands not purchased from, or ceded by, the Indians to the king of Great Britain, as the proprietor of the colonies, were to be considered as belonging to the United States generally, and might procure for them a fund to pay our great debt with. I have my doubts as to the whole of the 3d Sect. Art. 9th: will it not have a bad effect on our State? But, to return to the subject of the resolves of congress, and particularly those relating to our quota of troops, and their clothing, they could not be acted upon till made known, and the same may be said as to laying a tax for sinking our proportion of 5,000,000 of dollars in the present year; with this, that the military in Sussex, established by congress, independent of any authority in the state, prevented a representation from a third of the taxables thereof for the time past, and, according to the American creed, representation is necessary for taxation. Much more might be added to lessen the charges made

against us. Yet I am satisfied much must be done to wipe off such as are justly founded. I own the prospect is rather gloomy, but we are not to despair. No man is in a more difficult and unlucky situation than myself. Without any fixed habitation in the state, with little assistance, or prospect of assistance, in want of health and ability of body, I will not add mind, though also true, least I be suspected of seeking a compliment.

I showed generals Rodney and Patterson that part of your letter which relates to president M'Kinley; neither of them, or myself, had heard of his lodgings with ———, and general Rodney thinks it cannot be, for he has been told by those who knew, and might be relied on, that ——— was at ———, and ——— at one ———'s, a shoemaker, and had lodged there from the time of their going into Philadelphia. General Rodney says the president lodges now at one ———'s, opposite Christ church. I cannot pretend to point out a person to exchange for the president, but submit it to you on a review of the list of prisoners in the civil line, under the immediate direction of congress, which general Washington seems to refer to in a paragraph of his letter to me on that subject, an extract of which I think you have in mine of the

29th of December last; as to the presence of your colleagues on this occasion, or any other, shortly, you are not to expect it; Mr. Rodney is very necessary here, and as to Mr. Van Dyke, the situation of his family will keep him for awhile; for my own part, I think it a piece of justice due to every captive, to procure his release as soon as practicable, upon honourable terms; and as to the president, and his unlucky captivity, I am convinced he meant to support the cause of America to the utmost of his power; and I therefore wish you success in the application.

The bad weather we have had, has delayed the express to this day, the 9th of March, which enables me to enclose you a list of the members for Sussex; the most of them came to town last evening, and only three members from Newcastle county; so that we have not had a house since the 25th ultimo. Mr. Rodney says that he has nearly paid away the 10,000 dollars to the recruiting officers, one of whom, lieutenant Brown, came in yesterday from Marshy Hope bridge, where he had enlisted fourteen men on the Friday preceding—all volunteers, who came in for the purpose; so that our prospect is very flattering in this way at present: fail not to obtain the loan, and give despatch to the messenger,

a lieutenant in the troop of horse of this county, and you will oblige him, as well as your

Most obedient servant,

GEO. READ.

Hon. Thos. M'Kean.

York Town, April 3d, 1778.

SIR,

When I attended the general assembly of this state in December last, they obtained a promise that I would give a little assistance in draughting some bills at their adjournment in March, at which time I, accordingly, in pursuance of a letter from the speaker, went to Lancaster, and, having stayed there ten days, returned to York on the 19th. During this interval, your favour of the 4th of March, by lieutenant Frazer, arrived at York, and by the advice of the express, was opened by the president and read in congress. It was well there was nothing private in it, and I must confess you gave me more agreeable prospects of our little state, and more sincere pleasure, than any thing relating to it had done for three years past. I congratulate you on the whig election in Sussex. With such a general assembly as the present, what could I have done, or rather, could I not have done? Sure I am, you will make a proper use of this most fortunate

occurrence, in which there appears visibly the hand of Providence, which can alone save this deluded state. Though the resolve for completing the quota of troops, by draughting in the several states, passed against my consent, yet as Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, the four New England governments, &c. have agreed to it, I should have been glad if the general assembly had even proceeded no farther in that business; this would have showed a respect for the recommendation of congress, encouraged the recruiting service by making it the interest of every individual in the state, and prevented an opinion that I had wrote to the general assembly against the measure, which I never did; nor, indeed, did I ever hint the matter to any person whatever.—As to the proviso in the second section of article 9th of the confederation, quoted by you, to wit; "provided also that no state shall be deprived of *territory* for the benefit of the United States," my opinion is, that it must be referred to the subject matter of the preceding paragraph, and may, by a fair construction, mean, that in a contest between two states respecting boundaries, the territory taken from the one shall be added to the other, and not adjudged for the benefit of the United States; and yet I confess I have apprehensions, that it may, hereafter, be insisted to mean what

you seem to fear. Some gentlemen with whom I have conversed on this affair say, if the intention of congress was, that Virginia, &c. should be deemed at present to extend to the south sea, yet no injury could arise from thence to any of the United States; for that Delaware, for instance, has a right to apply for one or more townships for their troops, to be laid out equally with Virginia in that state, without paying any purchase money or any other expense, more than that of surveying, &c. which Virginians themselves must pay; and that, if that state increases in inhabitants, it will have to pay more towards the support of the government of the United States, and in the same proportion lessen the burden of the other states; but if Virginia, &c. grow too large, the people themselves will insist upon a new state or states to be erected, even if the congress should be passive; and no good reason can be assigned for refusing such a requisition, whenever it may be proper to grant it. The Stockbridge Indians in New Hampshire and Connecticut, the Oneidas in New York, &c. were I suppose the objects of the 4th section of the same article:—The 3d section of article 9th, seems to have been calculated for the disputed lands between purchasers under Maryland and Delaware, and Maryland and Pennsylvania; but upon the whole, it may not be an

improper method of adjusting such controversies. If Delaware had been represented in congress, at the time the finishing was given to the confederation, it would, I am persuaded, have been a public benefit, as well as a particular one to that state; but matters are too far gone, I fear, to procure any alterations, so many states have already empowered their delegates to ratify it; however, I will exert every nerve to accomplish any measure which shall be recommended by my constituents, who may think it advisable to direct their deputies to endeavour to procure any explanation of certain doubtful expressions in different articles, if they should not think it proper to do more.

Nothing has been effected with regard to president M'Kinley; but as the cartel for a general exchange is now debating, and settling between three commissioners on the part of general Washington, and the like number on the part of general Howe, in Germantown, where they met on the last day of March, I hope in a few weeks, something favorable for him may be done.

If you can procure any clothing for the Delaware battalion, it may be useful, but I am confident there is sufficient for the whole army, already purchased by congress, for above a year; and yet I am told the most of the troops are naked—peculation, ne-

glect of duty, avarice, and insolence, in most departments abound; but, with the favor of God, I shall contribute my part to drag forth and punish the culprits, though some of them are high in rank, and characters I did not suspect.

You will also receive a little pamphlet of the earl of Abington's, which is worth your perusal. General Rodney is not yet arrived, nor could I procure a lodging for him in town when he comes; indeed, when I return, I shall be at an equal loss for myself; this is discouraging, but we must not expect much comfort during this great and glorious struggle. It is reported Howe is recalled, and is to be succeeded by lord Townshend: this will be an active, and I fear a bloody, campaign.

April 12th, at Lancaster.

I find you give up the command in chief to general Rodney, so that perhaps it may suit you to come to congress.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedt. friend,

THOS. M'KEAN.

On the third of February, 1779, Mr. M'Kean laid before congress sundry resolutions adopted by the council of Delaware in the preceding month of

January, relative to the articles of confederation and perpetual union, and concurred in by the house of assembly, previously to the passage of a law empowering their delegates to sign and ratify them. Mr. Read, one of the committee appointed to take these articles into consideration, prepared the resolutions: their insertion, therefore, will not only afford an example of the political style of Mr. Read, but the able opinion of a sound lawyer upon a matter of deep interest:

"'The committee, to whom were referred the articles of confederation proposed by congress for a union of the states of America, do report thereon as follows:

"'That having duly considered the said articles, they *generally* approve of the same; but that there are particular parts of the 8th and 9th articles liable to just and strong objections, and, should they continue unaltered, will, in the opinion of your committee, prove prejudicial in their effects not only to this state, but to the general confederacy.

"'That part of the 8th article objected to, and disapproved of, by your committee, is the manner prescribed for the supply of a common treasury by the several states;—to wit:—' in proportion to the value of land within each state GRANTED TO OR SURVEYED for any person, as such land, and the build-

ings and improvements thereon, shall be estimated, according to such mode as the United States, in congress assembled, shall from time to time direct and appoint.' Such valuation, in any mode that we can suppose to produce equality, appears to your committee an impracticable thing; but, if not, it will be attended with so great expense of money and time, and that to be frequently repeated from the sudden alterations in the value of such property, that your committee think the establishing the proportion of each state by the number of its inhabitants, of every age, sex, and quality, would prove a more equal and less expensive mode of ascertaining such proportion.

"Your committee also consider the confining such valuation to the *granted* or *surveyed* lands as inequitable, as they conceive the lands not yet granted have a value, and, if so, they ought to contribute *pro rata* towards the discharge of the great debt created by the states, under their past united efforts in the protection of that species of property in common with others: unless all the ungranted land shall be considered as jointly to belong to the United States, as conquered at the common expense of blood and treasure, and which your committee consider they ought to be, on every principle of justice and sound policy, and that joint right

expressed in the articles in as clear and precise terms, as that the 'bills of credit emitted, money borrowed, and debts contracted, by or under the authority of congress, shall be deemed and considered as a charge against the United States.' But this joint right, your committee apprehend, may hereafter be said to be resigned to each state wherein such lands lie, by certain parts of, and expressions in, the 9th article disapproved of by your committee; to wit: by the words '*provided also* that no state shall be deprived of territory for the benefit of the United States,' at the latter end of the second section; and those words in the fourth section, which prescribes the powers of congress; viz. 'regulating the trade, and managing all affairs with the Indians, not members of any of the states, provided that the legislative right of any state within its *own limits* be not infringed or violated.'

"From the vague and extravagant descriptions of some of the states, in the first grants or charters for government, their claims for western limits have been to the southern ocean, including countries partially possessed by the kings of France and Spain. The provisional expressions in the article above mentioned, your committee apprehend, may and will be insisted to mean an admission of the extent of their respective limits, westward to

the said sea, and all the ungranted lands within those limits, *state territory*, and solely in the disposition of the states claiming those limits, though, heretofore, considered as belonging to the crown of Great Britain, and occasionally granted under that authority, with reservation of rents to a great amount. Such admission, your committee apprehend ought not to be; for that it will appropriate that to individual states, which hath been, or may be, acquired by the arms of the states general, and will furnish such individual state with a fund of wealth and strength, which may prompt them to subdue their weaker neighbours, and eventually destroy the fabric we are now raising. To prevent which consequences, your committee are of opinion, that not only the joint right in the ungranted land should be expressed as before mentioned, but that a moderate extent of limits beyond the present settlements in each of those states, should be provided for in the said articles.

Your committee also object to, and disapprove of, the whole of the second section of the 9th article aforesaid, as destroying and taking away that legal jurisdiction of the courts of law established within this state for determining controversies concerning private rights in lands within the same,

without fixing with precision another jurisdiction for the purpose."

Mr. Read also prepared the act of assembly which empowered the delegates of Delaware to ratify the articles of confederation.

On the 18th of August, 1779, he was compelled, from ill-health, to resign his seat in the legislature: in his address to the freeholders of Newcastle county, he observes that "he had served them in their general assembly for the twelve preceding years, without any solicitation on his part;" that "he was in earnest in declining, and did not wish to be courted to continue in their service, having no sinister ends or views to answer by this step, which had been suspected to have been the case of some who had given notices of the like kind heretofore." In 1780, however, he again devoted his services to the state in the legislature of Delaware.

On the fifth of December, 1782, Mr. Read was appointed one of the judges of the court of appeals in admiralty cases. This appointment was announced to him in the most flattering manner, by Mr. Boudinot, then president of congress, and afterwards the venerable president of the Bible society:

Philadelphia, December 6, 1782.

Sir,

It gives me very particular satisfaction to have

the honour of presenting you the commission of the United States in congress assembled, whereby you are constituted one of the judges of the court of appeals in all cases of capture on the water.

Your established character as a gentleman, lawyer, and man of integrity, leave me no room to doubt but this appointment will do honour to congress, produce the happiest consequences to the good citizens of these states, and, I hope, real satisfaction to yourself, from the consciousness of serving your country with fidelity.

I have the honour to be, with every sentiment of esteem and respect,

Sir,

Your obedient,

And very humble servant,

ELIAS BOUDINOT.

Hon. George Read.

His acceptance of this appointment was conveyed to Mr. Boudinot, in the following letter:

Newcastle, December 10th, 1782.

SIR,

I had the honour to receive your excellency's letter of the 6th instant, enclosing under its cover a commission to me from the United States of Ame-

rica in congress assembled, for a judge's place in their court of appeals.

This unlooked for mark of confidence from that honourable body, impresses me with the strongest sense of gratitude, and I can only say that under this impression, I accept of this appointment with the fullest intention to discharge the duties thereof to the best of my poor abilities, and I hope with an integrity that may become the station. I am persuaded that in doing so, I shall make the best return in my power, for the honour conferred, and the trust reposed in me by the great council of America.

I beg leave to return your excellency my particular thanks for the very flattering and polite manner in which you have been pleased to communicate to me this appointment.

I have the honour to be,
With great respect,
Your excellency's most obedient,
And very humble servant,
GEORGE READ.

His Excellency Elias Boudinot,
President of Congress.

This office was filled by Mr. Read until the abolition of the court.

In January, 1785, he was appointed, by congress, one of the commissioners, who constituted a federal court created by that body, conformably with the petitions of the states of New York and Massachusetts, for the purpose of determining a controversy which had arisen, in relation to territory. In 1786, he was nominated, by the legislature of Delaware, as one of their delegates to Annapolis, to consult with commissioners from the other states, relative to the formation of a system of commercial regulations for the union. In 1787, he was a member of the convention which framed the constitution of the United States. Immediately after the adoption of the constitution, he was elected a member of the senate of the United States.

In 1792, the sentiments of Mr. Read in relation to the abilities and integrity of the honourable John Adams, of whom he entertained an exalted opinion, were fully developed in a communication addressed to Gunning Bedford, Esq., who married the only sister of Mr. Read, and was subsequently governor of the state of Delaware:

Philadelphia, November 30th, 1792.

Dear Sir,

Recollecting that on Wednesday next, you meet your two colleagues as electors of president and

vice president of the United States, I have supposed that you would expect some information from me respecting Mr. Adams, the present vice president, as to his conduct in the chair of the senate of the United States, since so much pains has been taken in the public prints of the present year, to raise a general prejudice against him, in expectation of preventing his re-election.

It is but a piece of justice, due to Mr. Adams, for me to say that as chairman of the house of congress, of which I am a member from the Delaware state, his conduct at all times since his being placed there, hath appeared to me attentive, upright, fair, and unexceptionable, and his attendance at the daily meetings of the senate, uncommonly exact. As to his having abilities equal to that station, none of his detractors insinuate a want thereof, and any thing on that head from me must be unnecessary. His various political publications sufficiently evidence such ability.

With respect to the objections to him, which I have heard, or seen on paper, they principally existed previously to his former election, at which, you well know, his popularity was such as to induce a portion of electors in each state of the union to throw away their votes, (but not to be done now by those who wish his re-election,) by applying

them to names not with a view to their return, but in order to secure the presidency to general Washington. The present change of sentiment, therefore, with respect to Mr. Adams, is not easy to be accounted for at a distance from the central scene. I have supposed the clamour raised against Mr. Adams, to have proceeded from a personal dislike of an individual, contracted, perhaps, before the adoption of the present federal system; as well as from the general jealousy that such of the southern states as are most interested in the future seat of the federal government, entertain of the possibility, or probability, of its being changed through the influence of an eastern character, in high station.

Some pretend an opinion that a rotation in office is a salutary thing in republican governments, but this has always appeared to me an insincere reason urged by those who use it; but this, perhaps, because my sentiments have, at all times, been uniformly otherwise; to wit: that when a fit character hath been selected for office, either by the people or by their executive authority, and he discovers such fitness by an able discharge of duty for a time, such person hath a reasonable claim to an after-continuance in office; and I consider it as conducing to the interest of the community, for whom such

officer acts, by means of the improved knowledge of the duties of office which he acquires.

You may be assured that what I have before said as to Mr. Adams, hath not proceeded from any intimacy subsisting between us, for in the three past years, I have not been so many times in his residence, exclusive of the complimentary visit at the commencement of each session.

GEORGE READ.

Gunning Bedford, Esquire.

Mr. Read continued in the senate of the United States until September, 1793, when he was appointed chief justice of the supreme court of the state of Delaware. He performed the duties of this distinguished office with extraordinary ability and integrity, until the autumn of 1798, when his long life of public usefulness was terminated by a short and sudden illness. (*d*)

It was especially as a judge that Mr. Read was distinguished; his dispassionate habits of reasoning, his patience in hearing, his deliberation in deciding, and the essential requisites of profound legal knowledge and deep experience which he possessed, enabled him to discharge the duties of his office with honour to himself, and advantage to the com-

(*d*) See note D.

munity. When he assumed the office of chief justice of the state of Delaware in 1793, there was a peculiar necessity for a judge of firmness and ability. The period of the revolution, and that which followed its close, were marked with perplexity and confusion. The courts of justice were, in some degree, closed, and the master-spirits of the age were to be found in the cabinet or the camp. Laws were silent amid the din of arms. It is unnecessary to enumerate the effects of such confusion upon contracts and upon rights; but the duty of the judge was little less than the re-organization of a legal system out of chaos. This arduous duty was performed by Mr. Read with his usual ability, and his decisions are still reverenced in the state of Delaware, as the great land-marks of the judiciary and of the profession.

We have now seen this eminent individual distinguishing himself at the bar as a lawyer,—animating his fellow-citizens against oppression as a patriot,—taking his seat in the national council as a sage,—and presiding on the bench, as one of the judges of the land. In all these lofty stations, exposed to that strict and merciless scrutiny, to which, we trust, republicans will ever subject men in office, no blemish was discovered in his conduct. Applause at the bar did not, in him, generate vanity:

success in political life, ambition; nor the dignity of the bench, dogmatism. As a lawyer, a patriot, a senator, and a judge, he was alike unpretending, consistent, dignified, and impartial. His other peculiar characteristics, were an inflexible integrity of motive; a slow and calm deliberation of his subject; a cool determination of purpose; and an invincible perseverance in the conclusions of his judgment.

Similar traits were prominent in the course of his private life, softened, however, by those social amenities which so delightfully relieve the sterner features of the patriot, and show us the statesman in the husband and the father. His manners were dignified, and his dignity may sometimes have bordered upon austerity. He avoided trifling occupations, disliked familiarity, and could not tolerate the slightest violation of good manners, for which he was himself distinguished. A strict and consistent moralist, he granted no indulgence to laxity of principle in others; and he was remarkably averse to that qualified dependence which an obligation necessarily produces. Notwithstanding an exact attention to his expenditure, which he never permitted to exceed his income, his pecuniary liberality was very extensive.

In his person, Mr. Read was above the middle size, erect, and dignified in his demeanour; and he

was remarkable for attention to personal arrangements.

In fine, he was an excellent husband, a good father, an indulgent master, an upright judge, a fearless patriot, and a just man.

WILLIAM WILLIAMS.

WILLIAMS.

William Williams was born in the town of Lebanon, Windham county, in the province of Connecticut, on the 8th of April, 1731. He was descended from an ancient family, of Welsh extraction, a branch of which immigrated into America in the year 1630, and settled in Roxbury, Massachusetts. His grand-father, William Williams, was the minister of Hatfield, in Hampshire county, Massachusetts, and his father, the reverend Solomon Williams, D. D., was, during the long period of fifty-four years, the pastor of the first congregational society in Lebanon. He was a man of sense and learning, and highly respected by his contemporaries. He married Mary Porter, of Hadley, in the province of Massachusetts, the daughter of colonel Porter, at that time sheriff of Hampshire county. His family was large, consisting of five sons and three daughters: his daughters, one of whom is now

living, and four of his sons, all attained a good old age. His sons received the benefits of a classical education; four of them at Yale, and the subject of the present memoir, who was the fourth son, at Harvard, colleges. They all became useful and respectable men: Solomon, the eldest, died soon after he left college;—Elephalet was a minister of the gospel, in East Hartford, about fifty years;—Ezekiel was sheriff of Hartford county more than thirty years, and was remarkable for his energy and activity during the revolutionary war. He was a man of great benevolence and liberality, maintaining through the course of a long life, a strictly moral character, and unblemished reputation: he died about two years since in Wethersfield, at a very advanced age, leaving a numerous and respectable family. Thomas, the youngest son, was a physician and resided in Lebanon: he was a modest and worthy man, and died about four years since, strongly regretted by those who knew and esteemed his character.

William Williams was sixteen years of age when he entered Harvard college, in the year 1747. During the course of his studies, he displayed a large portion of talents and perseverance, and, pursuing his collegiate career with diligence and distinction, was honourably graduated in the year

1751. He then returned to Lebanon, and resided more than a year with his father, who directed his studies, which were principally theological: his fellow students were numerous, who profited by the instructions, as well as the extensive library of his father.

In the year 1755, during the French war, he attended his relative, colonel Ephraim Williams, as one of the staff of his regiment, on an expedition to Lake George. Colonel Williams was a brave officer, who commanded a regiment of provincial troops, raised by Massachusetts. He was despatched by sir William Johnson with a detachment of eleven hundred men, to observe the motions of the French and Indian army, commanded by the baron Diuskaw. When about four miles in advance of the main-body, they were attacked and overpowered by the enemy, after a brave resistance, during which colonel Williams was shot through the head by an Indian, and killed. Although the party was driven back, the retreat was skilfully conducted by colonel Whiting, the second in command, who succeeded in joining the forces under sir William Johnson, notwithstanding the superiority of the French force, and the loss which the regiment had sustained in the engagement: the French were finally repulsed, and the baron wounded and taken prisoner.

After the death of colonel Williams,* and at the close of the campaign, Mr. Williams returned to Lebanon: this measure was probably occasioned by the loss of his patron and relative. He was at this period, twenty-four years of age, and resolved to establish his residence in his native town. He returned dissatisfied and disgusted with the British commanders: their haughtiness, and arbitrary conduct, and their inattention to the interests of America, made a powerful and lasting impression upon his mind. Even at that early period, he formed the opinion that the prosperity of his native country would never be secured under the administration of officers who had no common interests nor feelings with the people; and that, to enable them to profit by the means within their reach, a government dependent on themselves, was necessary.

The youth as well as the maturer age of Mr. Williams were characterized by his fondness for mechanical pursuits; in architecture, he was particularly interested: nor was he inattentive to the study of mathematics, and the learned languages, and, at an advanced period of life, he was still a proficient in the Greek and Latin languages.

* Colonel Ephraim Williams founded Williams' college, at Williams-town, in Massachusetts: from him, the college and the town both derive their name.

At the age of twenty-five years, he commenced his political career as town clerk, to which situation he was annually elected during the long period of forty-five years. He was chosen, about the same time, to represent the town in the general assembly of Connecticut, although it was, at that period, unusual to select so young a man to fill that responsible station. He was soon after appointed a justice of the peace. It may almost be said that he was invariably, during the course of his long and useful life, a member of one of the branches of the legislature. During his services in that body, he was chosen clerk, and for many years, speaker, of the house of representatives. In the year 1780, he was elected an assistant or councillor, and was annually re-elected for twenty-four years, until he resigned the office in 1804, at which period he yielded up all his public employments, excepting that of judge probate, and retired to private life. His attention to the public service was so close and unvaried, that he was seldom absent from his seat in the legislature for more than *ninety sessions*, except when he was chosen a delegate to congress in 1776 and 1777. During the greater part of the war he was a member of the council of safety, whose sessions were daily and unremitting. He was a judge of the county court for Windham county, and judge

of probate for Windham district, during the term of forty years. He held many other offices of minor consequence, both civil and military. In fact, he expended his whole life in the service of the public, and in promoting the prosperity of his country.

In 1773, Mr. Williams was appointed colonel of the 12th regiment of militia, then very efficient, and comprising seventeen hundred men; but he resigned his commission in 1776, upon his election as a delegate to congress. Not being deficient in personal courage, the resignation of his military office at a period when it was probable that he might speedily be called into active service, excited some surprise; but he silenced these suggestions by observing that his lieutenant colonel, Henry Champion, Esq., was an older man than himself, and fully capable of commanding the regiment; that his duty and inclination led him to use his exertions in the deliberations of congress; and that, under such circumstances, he ought not to retain the office from one whom he considered a better military officer than himself. After he took his seat in the general congress, he never acted in a military capacity except as a volunteer at New London, when that town was destroyed by the traitor Arnold. On that occasion, he rode to New London, a distance of

twenty-three miles, in three hours; but the enemy was preparing to embark when he arrived.

At a general assembly of the governor and company of the state of Connecticut, held at New Haven on the second Thursday of October, 1775, Mr. Williams was appointed a delegate to represent the state in the general congress, and on the second Thursday of October, 1776, he was re-elected to that high and honourable office. He was therefore present and assisted in the deliberations of that august assembly, when the great charter of our independence was submitted to its consideration. Then, indeed, was the proudest moment of his life; when he stood among those fearless men, who with a noble daring, asserted the rights of their fellow-citizens and gave existence to an independent nation. This act was by many thought rash, and by all, considered dangerous; but now, when the passions and prejudices of the moment have passed away, it must universally be approved as resulting from profound policy and wisdom. From the moment that an appeal to arms was made, no alternative remained, nor could any middle course be pursued. Had the British ministry assented to our claims without any security for their continuance, they would have resumed the power thus relinquished, whenever circumstances afforded the op-

portunity. If they conceded to America the means of supporting those claims, they granted powers which must have resulted in the severance of the two countries. Whilst we acknowledged allegiance to the crown of Great Britain, no foreign aid could be expected: as an independent nation, we might reasonably hope for assistance from all who were interested in circumscribing her power.

Soon after the battle of Germantown, Mr. Williams was instrumental in preventing the capture of one of his colleagues, (colonel Dyer of Windham,) and narrowly escaped himself from falling into the hands of the enemy. On the approach of the British towards Philadelphia, he retired with the congress to Yorktown, where he remained during the winter.

The acknowledged aim of Mr. Williams in his political career, was to merit the title of an *honest* politician, and no one was more successful in obtaining it: he never desired any office in which he could not promote the public good. He was scrupulously honest in all the transactions of private life; and obtained, as a merchant, the unlimited confidence of his fellow-citizens. When the troubles of the revolution commenced, he embarked enthusiastically in the cause of the colonies. He settled and relinquished his mercantile concerns, and devoted

himself wholly to the service of his country. His exertions were indefatigable in arousing the feelings of his fellow-citizens, both by nervous essays in the public papers, and by public speaking: he was an elegant and sententious writer;—a vehement, and ardent orator. His voice was strong and powerful, and his eloquence gathered fresh force as he became animated by the increasing interest of his subject. His political career was untainted by selfishness, unless, indeed, it was selfish to seek elevation in the public opinion, by pure and disinterested patriotism. He was never wealthy, but he abandoned a lucrative business, and sacrificed the greater part of his estate in the public service: the property, which a life of plodding industry, devested of every care or feeling in the contest excepting such as might relate to the great goal of gain, might have swelled into an ample fortune, was, at the death of the patriot, dwindled down to less than five thousand dollars.

It is related, as an evidence of his sincerity, that in the early stages of the revolution, he had more than two thousand dollars in specie, being a portion of the proceeds of his merchandize: continental currency would not, at that period, procure the services which were required, and Mr. Williams from patriotic motives, exchanged the specie

in his possession for continental money: he lost the whole, but it was a loss which he never regretted. This anecdote affords an example of that practical patriotism which tests the sincerity of the heart.

The disinterestedness of his conduct was also apparent in the settlement of his affairs, previous to his thorough embarkation in the turbulent scenes of the revolution. His mind was so fully bent upon the one great object, that he scarcely took the trouble of collecting the notes which he had received: he was accustomed to remark, that many of his debtors had been impoverished by the war, some had died, and others had been killed in the public service, and that he would never enforce payment from the widow and the fatherless—more especially from those whose husbands and fathers had perished in the cause of their country.

He was a prudent and economical, but liberal, man. As judge of probate, he always declined receiving the customary fees from indigent widows, on whom he conferred the benefits of his friendly advice, which, from the extent of his influence, frequently proved of essential service. During the period in which he held the office of judge of probate, being about forty years, his decisions were never, in a single instance, reversed by the supreme court. In his judicial capacity, he was stern and inflexible

towards the hardened offender; but mild and benevolent, so far as his duty would permit, to those who were seduced by error, or evil counsels. In many cases, he devoted the perquisites of his office to charitable purposes; and always evinced that inattention to private emolument, which so strongly characterized the course of his political career.

The state of Connecticut has, from the earliest times, been particularly assiduous in the promotion of public instruction. A charitable fund had been granted for the support of schools, arising out of the sales of lands in Litchfield county, which was divided among the old settled towns, previous to the revolutionary war. In the confusion of the contest, this fund was lost by the greater part of the towns in the state: the authorities of Lebanon however, placing implicit confidence in the integrity of Mr. Williams, requested him to take charge of their school-fund. Amid the varied multiplicity of his affairs, he guarded it with solicitude, and after the termination of the war, he resigned his trust, including both principal and interest, which has now become a productive fund for the support of schools.

The duties of a select-man, which Mr. Williams performed during the whole war, were then of considerable importance. The select-men throughout New England manage the fiscal affairs of the

towns; they are the guardians of the poor, and during the war, the families of indigent soldiers were maintained by the towns. Mr. Williams was accustomed to remark, that at the commencement of the contest, there was absolutely nothing to support it but the patriotism of the people;—no stores; no money; no warlike instruments; no clothing; nothing to arm or to comfort the soldier. The select-men of the towns in Connecticut, in the beginning of the war, collected almost every thing necessary to clothe and equip the recruits, from private families. Mr. Williams, as one of the select-men of Lebanon, which then contained about four thousand inhabitants, visited almost every private family for the purpose of procuring lead, clothing, &c. but especially blankets, for the use of the army. He collected and forwarded more than one thousand blankets, with many other useful articles, including a large quantity of lead, at that time so indispensable, which was in many instances procured by cutting off the weights from the clocks: the inhabitants, and especially the ladies, freely parted with their last blanket for the public service. Such were the unremitting exertions of Mr. Williams, in almost every grade of office: whether we regard him as a judge upon the bench, or a member of the committee of safety;—a counsellor in congress, or a select-man of Leba-

nion,—he always appears in the same unvarnished character,—a pure, disinterested, and persevering patriot. After our present form of government was fully established, he often observed, that no person could possibly conceive the troubles that were encountered in obtaining our independence, but those who achieved it. His house was always open to the soldiers marching to, or returning from, the army: in the year 1781, he wholly resigned his dwelling for the accommodation of the officers of Lawrens' legion, who were stationed, during the winter, in Lebanon. His zeal and anxiety for the public good was truly without guile; his motives were as pure as the cause which he supported, and his name and character stand recorded upon the page of history, as a proud and triumphant refutation of the surly dogma of Doctor Johnson, that patriotism is "the last refuge of a scoundrel."

Mr. Williams, when his health permitted, rarely retired to rest before one o'clock at night, in the whole course of the war. During the day he was so fully occupied, that it was necessary, in conformity with his uniform rule, to arrange the business and accounts of the preceding day by trespassing upon those hours which are usually devoted to rest: although his constitution was remarkably firm, his

health became essentially impaired by this close and unremitting application.

The following characteristic anecdote fully displays his disposition and zeal in relation to the cause which he so warmly maintained. At the close of the year 1776, and a short time previous to the battle of Trenton, the people of the states began to be greatly alarmed at the disastrous situation of the national affairs. At this period the council of safety was sitting in Lebanon, and two of the members, the honourable William Hillhouse, and Benjamin Huntington, Esq., generally resided in the family of Mr. Williams. Mr. Hillhouse was a calm, firm, and sedate man, of superior judgment and knowledge: Mr. Huntington was a judge of the superior court, and a shrewd lawyer. The conversation naturally reverted to the darkness of the times, and the dangers which were then apprehended from the eventual success of the British arms: they at length considered their probable respective fates, should the fears of the nation be realized. Mr. Williams remarked, that he would in all probability be hung, as he had used every exertion to commence, and prosecute, the contest; that he had published a great number of hostile essays in the public papers of the day; and that he had signed the declaration of independence, which was an act of

rebellion that the British government would never pardon. Mr. Hillhouse said that he did not despair of ultimate success, but that whatever should happen, he would endeavour to act in a proper manner, and to the best advantage: judge Huntington observed, that as he neither signed the declaration of independence, nor had written any thing in opposition to the British government, he was, at all events, secure from the gallows. Mr. Williams instantly replied with great warmth, addressing himself to judge Huntington, "then, sir, you ought to be hanged for not doing your duty."

Mr. Williams was a member of the state convention of Connecticut, which adopted the existing constitution, and exerted his influence in its support. Although the people of Lebanon were opposed to it, they elected him as their representative, and he strongly advocated its adoption by the state, in opposition to the opinions of his constituents. Being fully impressed with the necessity of the measure, he acted, as he had ever done, independently, and it was not long before the inhabitants of Lebanon expressed their gratitude for his conduct upon that occasion, and coalesced in the opinion which he had expressed.

In the year 1772, he married Mary Trumbull, the second daughter of Jonathan Trumbull, Esq.,

at that time governor of the state; he was, without doubt, the most eminent man in Connecticut, and the distinguished services which he rendered to his country, will be long gratefully remembered. Mrs. Williams, a lady in every respect worthy of her descent and her connexion, is still living, in the seventy-eighth year of her age. Their family consisted of three children. Solomon, the eldest, died in October, 1810, in New York, where he had established himself in business with favourable prospects: he was thirty-eight years of age, at the time of his decease, and a man beloved and regretted by all who knew him. Faith, the only daughter of Mr. Williams, entered into marriage with John M'Clellan, Esq., and now resides at Woodstock, in Connecticut. William Trumbull Williams, Esq., the surviving son, a gentleman of conspicuous attainments, resides in Lebanon.

In the domestic circle, Mr. Williams was tender and affectionate, anxious for the welfare of his children, and particularly solicitous in procuring them the benefits of education: his sons were both educated at Yale college. His public engagements, and frequent absence from home, deprived him of many of the enjoyments of domestic life; but it served to impart fresh warmth to the pleasure with which he joined the family circle, and merged for

a season the cares of the patriot, in the blessings, and comforts of home. His domestic government was regular and uniform; his domestics participated in his paternal kindness; and this constant and endearing system resulted in the strictest bonds of union and love.

The death of his eldest son produced a powerful effect upon the mind of Mr. Williams, now far advanced in life, and he never recovered from the shock which it occasioned. From that moment his health gradually declined: when upon the bed of death, not having spoken for the space of four days, he called in a clear voice upon the name of his deceased son, and required him to attend his dying parent,—and almost instantly expired. He died on the second day of August, 1811, in the eighty-first year of his age. Old age, and grief for the premature death of his son, were the causes of his death: possessed of an excellent constitution, his faculties remained uninjured until a few years before his decease, when his hearing became somewhat impaired. His person was of the middle stature and remarkably erect and well proportioned: in his youth, his features were handsome; his hair and eyes were black; his nose, aquiline; his face, round; and his complexion, fair.

His temper was naturally ardent, but his exertions to attain the command over it were, in some degree, crowned with success. He possessed, however, during his whole life, a redundancy of spirit and vehemence of expression, which frequently created in himself, strong and sorrowful feelings. On ordinary occasions he was taciturn and reserved: he was involved habitually in deep thinking, and when he had formed his decision, was tenacious of his opinion. He was, by many, considered proud; —an unjust opinion, which arose, probably, from his natural reserve. He did not, however, undervalue his public services, although he was too independent to solicit a vote, and too honest to vote upon any popular occasion, in opposition to the convictions of his own conscience, or to his own proper ideas of the public welfare. In fact, his disinterested, honest, and upright conduct, rendered him a model for all politicians; without popular manners, he was semi-annually elected to public office, for more than fifty years, thus reviving the observation of the poet, "That corruption wins not more than honesty."

Mr. Williams was a man of piety: he entertained the religious opinions of the congregationalists, of which communion he became a member in his youth, and through the course of a long life, he

never varied from his professions. In all the various situations in which he was placed, and the connexions which he was compelled to form with all classes of people, he preserved, unblemished, his christian character, conduct, and conversation. The high opinion which his brethren of the church entertained relative to his piety and virtue, may be inferred from his election, when a young man, to the office of deacon, which he retained until his death. He honoured the sacred ordinances, and was a strict attendant at church: his liberality towards clergymen, and all religious, charitable, and missionary societies, was very conspicuous. Although rigid in his religious opinions, he was free from bigotry, and loving, as he did, all real christians, conscientiously maintained that every man ought to worship the Creator after his own heart. At the close of his life, being deprived in a great measure of the enjoyments and benefits of social intercourse by his deafness, he spent a great proportion of his time in reading, meditation, and prayer. "At length the time that infinite wisdom had fixed being come, and the stores of nature being exhausted, he gave up the ghost and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years; and he was gathered to his people."

SAMUEL HUNTINGTON.

HUNTINGTON.

Among the phalanx of patriots which fearlessly and unbroken, resisted the menaces and efforts of the British government to prevent the declaration of independence, it is remarkable to observe the great proportion that arose from the humble walks of life, and by the vigour of their intellect, and unwearied perseverance, compensated the deficiencies of early education, and enrolled themselves with honour and capacity, among the champions of colonial freedom. When we look upon the plough-boy, or the mechanic, self-taught masters in the school of policy, elevated to the dignity of legislation, which, at that period, was conferred upon talents and integrity alone,—when we see them seated among the first ranks of that great deliberative body which sealed with solemn pledges its devotion to independence—we are penetrated with deep emotions of admiration, not only at the powerful

perseverance which rescued them from oblivion, but at the strength of mind and stability of purpose, which influenced and incited humble individuals to aspire to and attain a rank among the fathers and founders of the republic. But it is in times of public commotion, when the minds of men are powerfully agitated in the pursuit of favourite and important objects, that talents and genius attain their proper level. In seasons of public prosperity, when the vessel of the state pursues its course with favourable gales, and no adverse winds impede its progress, little skill is necessary in the pilot or the crew: but when clouds darken the political horizon, and the tempest approaches, the helm is willingly abandoned to the master-spirits who have the skill and resolution to breast the storm.

Samuel Huntington was the descendant of an ancient and respectable family, which immigrated at an early period into this country, and landed at Saybrook, in the province of Connecticut. His father, Nathaniel Huntington, was a plain, but worthy, farmer, who followed his occupation in the town of Windham: his mother was distinguished for piety and native talent; and their numerous children, of whom several devoted themselves to the gospel ministry, were endowed with an unusual portion of mental vigour and intelligence. The re-

verend Dr. Joseph Huntington, formerly minister of Coventry, a man of solid learning and exemplary piety, was one of the three sons who received a liberal education: he is well known as the author of a posthumous work, entitled "Calvinism Improved, or the Gospel Illustrated as a system of real Grace issuing in the Salvation of all men:" he was graduated at Yale college in 1762, and died in the year 1795. Samuel, however, did not participate in the invaluable benefits which a collegiate education conferred upon his brothers: being the eldest son, he was destined by his parents to pursue a more humble, but certain, course of life, by tilling the earth under the auspices of his father. This was, no doubt, at that time, considered an enviable situation: the immediate presence of paternal protection, and the acquisition of practical knowledge in an indispensible branch of political economy, was infinitely more inviting than a precarious dependence upon the probable advantages which might result from a liberal education. The pulpit or the bar was then considered, in general, as the ultimate destination of the student, whose resources centred in himself, and whose only means of support were to be derived from his exertions in the acquisition of knowledge, and the improvement of his mental abilities. But these resources were equally uncer-

tain: the ministry of the Gospel demanded moral as well as intellectual requisites, and when properly attained, the hopes and the means of the incumbent were closely contracted. The profession of the law required superior talents: to the eloquent and intelligent, it was the most certain path to wealth and distinction, but mediocrity of talents, or want of fluency, were insuperable obstacles to the attainment of either. The advocate, whose talents are not conspicuous, toils through life burthened with an arduous profession, without acquiring reputation for his exertions, or remuneration for his labour: from these considerations, the agricultural lot of Mr. Huntington was considered more fortunate than if he had been destined to embark in professional pursuits.

He was born in Windham, Connecticut, on the third day of July, 1732. His opportunities of acquiring knowledge were extremely limited, and he received no other education than the common schools of Connecticut at that period, afforded. Gifted, however, with an excellent understanding, and a strong taste for mental improvement, he employed all his leisure hours in reading and study. The labours of the farm, which he continued to perform until the twenty-second year of his age, necessarily occupied the greater portion of his time; yet,

surmounting this obstacle, and without the assistance of a collegiate education, his strong and discerning mind enabled him to acquire a profitable stock of scientific information, upon various subjects. At the age of twenty-two years, when he abandoned his agricultural pursuits to engage in the study of the law, he had acquired principally from his own unassisted exertions, an excellent common education. In the knowledge of the Latin language, his progress was considerable, but it does not appear that he directed his attention to any other foreign tongue.

A propensity for legal pursuits, which appears to have influenced his mind at an early period, was the stable foundation upon which his subsequent usefulness and celebrity were erected. The prospect of political fame could not, at that time, have incited his exertions, and it was the anticipation of a prosperous termination of his favourite pursuit alone, which induced him at the advanced age of twenty-two years, to apply himself seriously to the study of the law. He resolved to enter the mighty maze with no other guide than his own judgment and perseverance, and if fancy or eloquence should fail, to attain distinction by industry and self-denial. It is probable that the method adopted by him, arose from his pecuniary circumstances: he did not

profit by any legal tuition in the office of a lawyer, but borrowed the necessary books from colonel Jedediah Elderkin, a respectable member of the profession, residing in Norwich. The difficulties arising from this mode of study, were speedily surmounted by the persevering industry of Mr. Huntington, and having attained a competent knowledge of the general principles of law, he commenced his professional career in the town of Windham. In 1760, he removed to Norwich: at this period his reputation as a man of talents became more extensive, and his success and celebrity as a lawyer and an advocate, made a correspondent progress. Aided by a candid and deliberate manner, which appeared in some degree constitutional, few lawyers enjoyed a more extensive practice, or attracted more general applause. From his good sense, intelligence, and integrity, his preferment was remarkably rapid: in a few years his character as a man of business and punctuality was firmly established; his reputation as a lawyer was exalted; and his extensive practice included all the important cases of his native county, as well as of those which bordered upon it.

In the thirtieth year of his age, the flattering prospect which presented itself to his view, induced him to unite the pleasures of domestic life with

the triumphs of professional science. He married Martha, the daughter of the reverend Ebenezer Devotion, a gentleman of respectable talents and great usefulness in the town of Windham, of which he was the minister. This excellent lady possessed an amiable disposition, and condescending manners: the number was not few of those who had profited by her christian benefactions, and many of the poor could "rise up and call her blessed." The consequence of this conjugal relation, although no offspring cemented the union, was the enjoyment of pure domestic felicity until the decease of Mrs. Huntington. Economical and exemplary in their habits, they, in some degree, avoided all society excepting that which courted their attention. Having no offspring, Mr. Huntington adopted two of the children of his brother, the reverend Joseph Huntington, to whom, having married sisters, he was doubly united. The late Samuel Huntington, governor of Ohio, and Mrs. Griffin, the wife of the reverend doctor Griffin, president of William's college in Massachusetts, were the fortunate individuals who supplied the deficiency in his family, and profited by his excellent example and instructions. Mrs. Huntington died on the fourth of June, 1794, in the fifty-sixth year of her age.

In 1764, Mr. Huntington commenced his political labours as a representative of the town of Norwich in the general assembly; and in the following year received the office of king's attorney, which he sustained with reputation, until more important services induced him to relinquish it. In 1774, he was appointed an associate judge in the superior court, and in the following year, a member of the council of Connecticut.

Being decided in his opposition to the claims and oppressions of the British parliament, and active in his exertions in favour of the colonies, the general assembly of Connecticut, properly appreciating his talents and patriotism, appointed him a delegate to congress, on the second Thursday of October, 1775, in conjunction with Roger Sherman, Oliver Wolcott, Titus Hosmer, and William Williams, Esquires. On the 16th of January, 1776, he took his seat in that venerable assembly, and in the subsequent month of July, affixed his signature to an instrument which has excited the admiration of all contemporary nations, and will continue to be cherished and maintained so long as free principles and free institutions are permitted to exist. In this high station, he devoted his talents and time to the public service, during several successive years. His stern integrity, and inflexible patriotism, rendered

him a prominent member, and attracted a large share of the current business of the house: as a member of numerous important committees, he acted with judgment and deliberation, and cheerfully and perseveringly dedicated his moments of leisure to the general benefit of the country. He zealously performed the duties of this office during the years 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779, and 1780, when he returned to Connecticut, and resumed his station upon the bench, and seat in the council; which had been continued vacant until his return.

The estimation in which Mr. Huntington was held by his fellow members, may be properly appreciated from his appointment, on the 28th of September, 1779, to the highest civil dignity of the country. On the resignation of the honourable John Jay, who had been appointed minister plenipotentiary to negociate a treaty of amity and commerce, and of alliance, between the United States of America, and his catholic majesty, Mr. Huntington was elected president of congress: in 1780, he was re-elected to the same honourable office, which he continued to fill with dignity and impartiality until the following year, when, worn out by the constant cares of public life, and his unremitting application to his official duties, he desired leave of absence, and intimated to the house the

necessity of his returning home for the re-establishment of his health. The nomination of his successor was, however, postponed by congress, which appeared unwilling to dispense with the services of a president, whose practical worth had been so long and amply displayed. After the expiration of two months, Mr. Huntington, on the sixth of July, 1781, more explicitly declared that his ill state of health would not permit him to continue longer in the exercise of the duties of that office, and renewed his application for leave of absence. His resignation was then accepted, and Samuel Johnson Esq., of North Carolina, declining the appointment, the honourable Thomas M'Kean was elevated to the presidency. A few days after his retirement, the thanks of congress were presented to Mr. Huntington, "in testimony of their approbation of his conduct in the chair, and in the execution of public business."

After having thus pursued his congressional career with distinguished success, rising by the energy of his own mind and the perseverance of self-instruction, from the plough to the presidency, Mr. Huntington, in August, 1781, resumed his judicial functions in the superior court of Connecticut, and his station in the council of that state. His rapid exaltation had not proved prejudicial to his mind

or manners, but he returned to his constituents in the same plain and unassuming character, which had first attracted their confidence and admiration. The honours which had been conferred upon him might reasonably have excited some feelings of honest pride, and self-gratulation, as they sprung from the instimulation of his own mind, and his unassisted exertions, and application in the pursuit of knowledge: the path which he had been compelled to pursue was rugged and intricate, until softened and disentangled by his own labour and resolution. Although, in his early youth, he possessed a studious and contemplative mind, he wanted that precocity of talents which so often disappoints our expectations. Premature ripeness of the understanding leads less frequently to distinction than a natural and deliberate development, improved and protected in its regular advance by the advantages of education, and free from that destructive consciousness of self-superiority which a precocious genius is too prone to display, and which, causing the possessor to despise the instruction of others, leaves him at the age of manhood, far behind his less gifted, but more persevering and circumspect, competitors. But if a justifiable pride proved a source of self-satisfaction to Mr. Huntington, it was studiously concealed within the recesses of his own breast.

He never evinced, either in his conduct or conversation, any exultation in regard to his political or professional prosperity, but uniformly maintained the mild and modest character for which he was distinguished at the commencement of his career.

On the second Thursday in May, 1782, he was again elected a delegate to congress, but it does not appear that he joined his colleagues in that body during the year for which he was then appointed. The injury which his health had previously sustained, and his duties as a judge, and a counsellor, probably prevented him from becoming an active member of the delegation. But his desire to engage in scenes of more general usefulness, overcame these objections at the ensuing election; having been re-appointed on the second Thursday of May, 1783, he resumed his seat in congress on the following twenty-ninth of July, soon after the disorderly and menacing appearance of a number of armed mutineers about the hall within which that body was assembled in Philadelphia, had induced them, for the preservation of the safety and dignity of the federal government, to remove to Princeton, in New Jersey. He continued, without intermission, to perform his duties in congress until its adjournment to Annapolis on the fourth of November, 1783, when he finally retired from the

great council of the nation, of which he had so long been a conspicuous and influential member: the appointment of delegates to represent the state of Connecticut had taken place in the preceding month, at which time he declined a re-election. Oliver Wolcott, Oliver Ellsworth, and Richard Law, Esquires, pursued the same course, and the delegation from Connecticut was wholly composed of new members, some of whom had previously represented the state in the darkest days of the revolution.

But the talents of Mr. Huntington were too valuable to be restricted to the duties of a private member of society, nor was he, probably, desirous of deserting the public theatre upon which he had acted so conspicuous a part, and gained such well merited reputation. In 1784, soon after his return from congress, he was appointed chief justice of the superior court of Connecticut, and after discharging the duties of that office for one year, was elected lieutenant governor of the state. Having at all times a perfect command over his passions, he presided on the bench with great ability, and impartiality: no judge in Connecticut was more dignified in his deportment, more courteous and polite to the gentlemen of the bar, nor more respected by the particular parties interested in the proceedings of

the court, as well as the public in general. His name and his virtues are frequently mentioned by those who remember him in his judicial capacity, with respect and veneration.

In 1786, he succeeded governor Griswold, as chief magistrate of the state, and continued to be annually re-elected, with singular unanimity, until his death. The prosperity of Connecticut during his administration, and the flourishing condition of its civil and military interests, are unequivocal testimonies of the wisdom and fidelity with which he presided.

This excellent man and undeviating patriot died, in Norwich, on the fifth day of January, 1796, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. Although afflicted with a complication of disorders, particularly the dropsy in the chest, his death was tranquil and exemplary, and previous to the singular debility both of mind and body under which he laboured a few days before that event, his religious confidence continued firm and unwavering. In his person, Mr. Huntington was of the common stature; his complexion dark, and his eye bright and penetrating: his manners were somewhat formal, and he possessed a peculiar faculty of repressing impertinence, repelling unpleasant advances, and keeping aloof from the criticising observations of the multitude.

But in the social circle of relatives and friends, he was a pleasing and entertaining companion. Without inflicting upon others the consciousness of inferiority, he never descended from the dignity of his station.

Few men, possessing all the facilities of education, have attained a greater share of civil honours than the self-taught Huntington. Deserting the cultivation of the soil, in which he was not a speculative, but a practical labourer, he plunged guideless, but courageously, into the long labyrinth of the law. Threading its many mazes with circumspect and steady steps, he emerged triumphantly from its dark and devious course, into the plain and brilliant road which conducted him to honour and renown. Pursuing his legal career, his progress was only arrested by the attainment of the first judicial station in the state, and his political qualifications elevated him to the highest civil dignity which it was in the power of the people of the United States to confer, as the president of congress, and of the particular citizens of Connecticut, as their chief counsellor and magistrate. A firm republican in principle and practice, he never deviated nor hesitated in the course which it was his duty to pursue; having formed those principles after mature reflection, he persevered in a regular opposition to the arbi-

trary proceedings of the British government: but while he strenuously advocated a firm and deliberate resistance, and encouraged the incitement of popular feelings when restricted within proper bounds, he uniformly opposed and discountenanced all tumultuous meetings of the people; and the excesses that were committed at different periods by lawless and impetuous mobs, met with his decided disapprobation. He was distinguished less as an orator than a judge, and his distinguishing characteristics, both in conversation and in epistolary correspondence, were brevity and caution.

His deportment in domestic life was excellent; his temper serene; and his disposition benevolent. The whole tenor of his conversation was ingratiating and exemplary; and although sometimes absorbed in deep meditation, he was generally friendly, cheerful, and social. Being a man of great simplicity and plainness of manners, he was averse to all pageantry and parade, and strictly economical in his expenditures: he maintained that it was a public duty to exhibit such an example as might, so far as his individual efforts could avail, counteract the spirit of extravagance which had begun to appear. His principal aim in his domestic arrangements was comfort and convenience without splendour; although not hostile to good living, he was

simple, sparing, and temperate in his own diet. This rigorous economy attracted the charge of parsimony, upon which it closely bordered; but it was probably advanced by individuals, who believed that extravagance was the mark of a generous, and economy of an avaricious, disposition: to those who have been educated in habits of care and foresight, economy insures independence, and frequently enables the charitable, who do not possess great riches, to indulge in extensive acts of benevolence. Thus the private beneficence of Mr. Huntington could have been amply attested, particularly by those relatives whose situation required his assistance.

Governor Huntington was a man of profound thought and penetration, of great prudence and practical wisdom, of patient investigation and singular perseverance, and of distinguished moderation and equanimity: he was cool and deliberate, moderate and circumspect in all his actions, and possessed of a clear and sound mind. His conversation, studiously avoiding frivolous topics, was eminently instructive, and he delivered his sentiments in few, but weighty words. He inherited from nature a large share of that delicacy and sense of propriety which distinguish the man of honour and refinement. Being truly an upright man, one

of the leading traits of his character was the love of justice; this principle was so deeply and indelibly impressed upon his heart, that in whatever circle of society he moved, and in whatever situation of life he was placed, he was steadfastly and strenuously its advocate and promoter. Notwithstanding his elevation, his mind was unsullied by that false pride, which dignity and honours are so apt to create: after performing the business of his office, and instructing numerous students in the principles of the law, he was accustomed, if any garden or household utensils had been broken, to repair them with his own hands; and, rather than require the attendance of a servant for any trivial services, he would perform them himself. It may truly be said that no man ever possessed greater mildness or equanimity than governor Huntington; a living witness can attest, that during a long residence of twenty-four years in his family, he never, in a single instance, exhibited the slightest symptoms of anger, nor spoke one word calculated to wound the feelings of another, or to injure an absent person. He was the friend of order and of religion, a member of the christian church, and punctual in the devotions of the family.

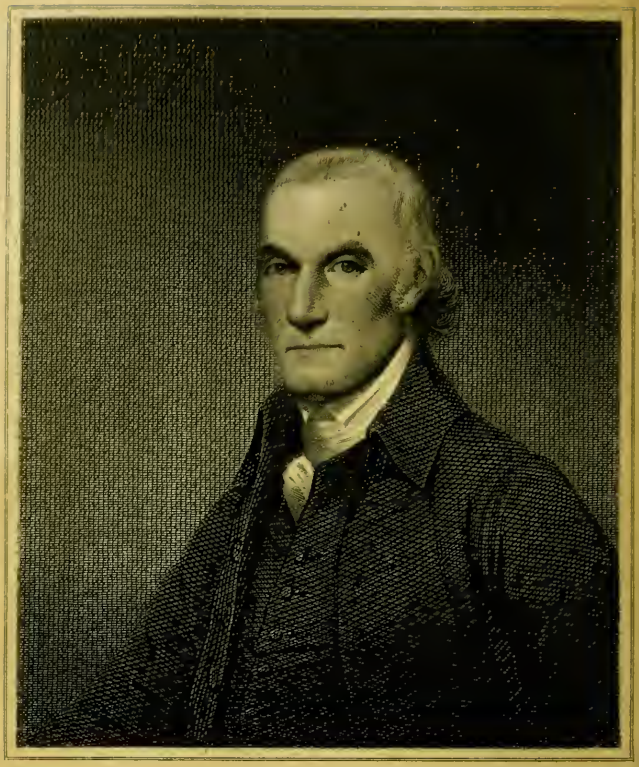
But the eulogy of words can never exalt the memory, which is not previously embalmed in the

progress of an exemplary life. For many years a professor of religion, Mr. Huntington appeared to enjoy great satisfaction both in the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel; a constant attendant upon public worship, "he was occasionally the people's mouth to God, when destitute of preaching." As a professor of christianity, and supporter of its institutions, he was exemplary and devout: he manifested an unshaken faith in its doctrines, amid the distresses of declining life, until debility of mind and body, produced by his last illness, rendered him incapable of social intercourse.

Such was Samuel Huntington, the friend of man; loaded with honours, he attained a good old age, and "when David had served his own generation, by the will of God, he fell on sleep."*

* Strong's Funeral Sermon.

WILLIAM FLOYD.



WILLIAM FLOYD

Engraved by A.B.Durand from a Painting

in Delaplaine's Gallery.

FLOYD.

It is a reflection equally humiliating to the pride of man, and depressing to the hopes of the philanthropist, that among the numerous revolutions of states and empires recorded by history, few can be found which have been productive of any signal and permanent benefit to mankind. Despotisms the most intolerant, have given way to usurpations not less odious, and every effort at amelioration, has yielded to that invincible propensity which leads to the veneration of abuses consecrated by time, and which embraces the errors of our ancestors as a valuable inheritance.

The light of political science has occasionally penetrated the gloom of ignorance and absurdity, but the feeble glimmerings have been insufficient to dissolve the bonds of oppression, and mankind has remained, through a long succession of ages, enslaved under the dominion of error, and enchained in

the fetters of inveterate custom. Little has been added to the stock of rational liberty, and small has been the advancement in the paths of political knowledge.

From contemplations so painful, we revert with strong emotions of pleasure, to an event pregnant with hope and promise, and eminently propitious to the best interests of man. The American revolution forms a proud contrast to all those which have preceded it, and exhibits to the world the first bold stand in defence of abstract principles, which it has ever beheld.

It is an inquiry as philosophical as it is interesting, and one which merits more attention than it has hitherto received, how far the establishment of a free government in America, was owing to the particular state of the world at that period, and to the general diffusion of intelligence, which was greater then than in any former age. Such an investigation, it is believed, would lead us to regard it rather as a step in the natural history of man, than as the result of adventitious circumstances: and, when taken in connexion with subsequent events, would induce a persuasion, that similar modifications of political institutions must eventually be coextensive with the causes from which it originated. If these inferences are correct, they afford a solid founda-

tion for the most pleasing anticipations of the extension of political science, and the improvement of the condition of man.

But whether it be ascribed to the advance of knowledge, which, since the invention of printing, has been steadily and uninterruptedly maintained, or to the peculiar situation, and moral constitution, of the American colonies, it must, nevertheless, be regarded as the first impulse given to the propagation of free principles; and, although the silent march of intellect must and will eventually be irresistible, the example of America has unquestionably had an extensive influence in arousing the civilized world, at an earlier period, from the lethargic insensibility in which it has reposed for so many ages.

As this influence becomes more extensively diffused, and the consequences which flow from it gradually develop themselves, the event which gave them birth, naturally swells with increasing interest, and a laudable and rational curiosity is excited, to analyse, in the language of science, the intelligence which opened the path to the accomplishment of this glorious achievement. It is by these means that we are enabled to devest this great political revolution of its dependance upon fortuitous circumstances, and, by tracing its source

to principles which never change, and causes which always exist, to render it a proud trophy to the triumph of reason.

The wisdom, the patriotism, and the devotion to the common cause, which characterized the American congress, have already excited the applause of the historian, and the admiration of mankind. It is only, however, by considering them individually, in their private relations and circumstances, that these qualities can be appreciated to their full extent. The subject of the following notice was a member of that body during the greater part of the revolutionary war, and participated deeply with those with whom he was associated, in an ardent and resolute attachment to the liberty of his country.

William Floyd was the son of an opulent and respectable landholder in the county of Suffolk, upon Long Island, who left him, at an early age, the principal inheritor of his estate. His grandfather, Richard Floyd, emigrated from Wales about the year 1680, and settled at Setauket upon Long Island, where he engaged in agriculture, and soon acquired considerable distinction from his wealth and public spirit. His second son, Nicoll, was a man of domestic habits, who confined himself chiefly to the occupations of private life, and died at an

early age, with the reputation of a respectable farmer. His eldest son, the subject of this memoir, was born on the seventeenth of December, 1734. His education, although liberal for the times, was chiefly confined to the useful branches of knowledge, and was hardly completed, when he was called, by the death of his father, to assume the management of his patrimonial estate. His early life was principally spent in the circle of an extensive family connexion, which comprised the most respectable families in the county. The country in which he lived, at that time abounded with game of every variety, and, having little to occupy his attention, much of his time was devoted to hunting, an amusement to which he was passionately addicted. His hospitality corresponded with his means of indulging in it, and his house became the perpetual resort of an extensive acquaintance, and the frequent scene of social festivity.

As a leading member of the society in which he lived, he was often called in his turn, to the discharge of local offices incident to municipal regulations, in which his conduct was marked with attention and fidelity. Other offices of greater consequence, and more extensive in their relations, were also sustained by him, in a manner which met the approbation of his fellow citizens, and procur-

ed for him the acquaintance and friendship of the most respectable men in the then province.

He embarked, at an early period, in the controversy between Great Britain and the colonies, and as it grew more animated, became conspicuous for the zeal and ardour with which he espoused the popular cause. There was in his conduct, both in public and private life, a characteristic sincerity which never failed to inspire confidence; and which, combined with the warmth and spirit with which he opposed the usurpations of the British government, had acquired for him an extensive popularity. It was, doubtless, from these considerations, that he was appointed one of the delegates from New York to the first continental congress, which met in Philadelphia on the fifth of September, 1774. In that patriotic and venerable assembly, he was associated with men whose names are identified with their country's birth, and will long be cherished in grateful remembrance. Their proceedings had a powerful effect in arousing the attention of the colonists, and in directing it to the true points on which the controversy with the parent country rested; they were also, admirably calculated, by their moderation and firmness, to conciliate the minds of moderate and reflecting men. It may, perhaps, be observed with truth,

that with all the light which experience affords, the most consummate wisdom could hardly devise a system of measures better adapted to the situation of the colonies at that time, than those which are recorded upon the journals of the first continental congress.

Previous to his attendance in congress, Mr. Floyd had been appointed to the command of the militia of the county of Suffolk, and upon his return, he found Long Island menaced with an invasion from a naval force assembled in Gardiners bay, with the avowed object of gathering supplies. When the landing of the enemy was reported to him, he promptly assembled the force under his command, and marched to the point of attack. It was, perhaps, fortunate for his little army, composed of raw and undisciplined militia, that the terror of their approach left nothing for their arms to accomplish. The activity displayed, however, had an important effect, in inducing the enemy to abandon their design.

In April, 1775, having been again chosen, by the provincial assembly of New York, a delegate to the general congress of the colonies, he took his seat in the second continental congress, which met in Philadelphia on the tenth of May following, and continued a constant attendant for more than two

years. As a member of this congress, general Floyd united with his illustrious associates in boldly dissolving the political bonds which connected the colonies to the British crown, and co-operated in the arduous and responsible task of arraying them in hostility to the British empire. Under circumstances of danger and distress, with difficulties almost insurmountable, and embarrassments the most complicated, they were raised from the posture of supplication, and clothed in the armour of war.

During this interesting and protracted session, general Floyd was constantly and actively employed in the discharge of his public duties, to which he bestowed the most unremitting attention. He was chosen on numerous and important committees, the details of which were complicated, difficult, and in many cases, extremely laborious. In procuring supplies for the army, in forwarding the expedition ordered against Canada, and particularly in introducing an efficient organization of the militia, (which may be said to have been the mother of the regular army,) as well as in many other matters to which his attention was particularly directed by congress, he was enabled, by his experience and habits of business, to render essential service.

During his attendance in congress, Long Island was evacuated by the American troops, and occupied by those of Great Britain. His family, in consequence of this event, were driven from their home in great haste and confusion, and were removed by his friends into Connecticut. The produce and stock of his estate were seized by the enemy, and the mansion-house selected as a rendezvous for a party of horse, by whom it was occupied during the remainder of the war. This event was the source of serious inconvenience to him, as it precluded him from deriving any benefit from his landed property, for nearly seven years, and left him without a house for himself and his family.

On the eighth of May, 1777, general Floyd was appointed a senator of the state of New York, under the constitution of the state which had then been recently adopted. On the thirteenth of May, the provincial convention passed a resolution, that the thanks of the convention be given to him, and his colleagues, "delegates of the state of New York in the honourable the continental congress, for their long and faithful services rendered to the colony of New York, and to the said state."

On the ninth of September, 1777, he took his seat in the senate of New York, at their first session under the new constitution. This being the

first constitutional legislature since the colonial assembly was dissolved, it devolved upon them to organize the government, and adopt a code of laws, suited to existing circumstances. Of this body, he became a leading and influential member, and attended in his place, with some short intervals, until the sixth of November, 1778, when they adjourned.

On the fifteenth of October, 1778, he was unanimously re-elected a delegate to the continental congress, by a joint ballot of the senate and assembly, and on the second of January following, resumed his seat in that body, where he soon became actively employed on numerous committees, and continued in attendance until the ninth of June, when he obtained leave of absence.

On the twenty-fourth of August, 1779, the senate of New York again convened, and he continued to meet with them until the following December. The depreciation of the state currency having become, at this time, serious and alarming, a joint committee of the senate and house of assembly was appointed to take the subject into consideration. On the twenty-second of September, he made a report to the senate, founded upon the soundest principles of financial science. An equal and productive system of taxation was urged, as the best mode of supplying the public necessities, and pre-

venting the further emission of paper money, and gradually reducing the amount in circulation, as the only effectual means of restoring it to credit. He was ever strongly opposed to anticipating the future resources of a state, to satisfy the present exigences, and having seen, in repeated instances, that from the want of capitalists in the country, the depreciation of the public credit, and consequent loss, far exceeded the real grounds for distrust, he considered a prompt and efficacious system of taxation, as adequate to the demands of the public service, as the least burthensome in its operation, and as the surest guard against improvident expenditure. These principles he kept steadily in view during a long course of public service, and when he retired from public life, he had the satisfaction of leaving the finances of the state in a condition of unparalleled prosperity.

On the fourteenth of October, 1779, the legislature of New York appointed him, together with Ezra L'Hommedieu and John Sloss. Hobart, commissioner to attend a convention of the eastern states, for the purpose of adopting some regulations in relation to supplies of provisions, which, from extensive monopolies, had become scarce, and, in consequence of the exorbitant prices demanded, threatened the land with famine.

Having been, on the eleventh of October, 1779, unanimously re-elected a delegate to the continental congress, he again attended in his place on the second of December. On the next day, he was elected a member of the board of admiralty, and on the thirteenth, was chosen a member of the treasury board. His health having become impaired by his incessant occupation, he applied to congress, on the first of March following, to be excused from the board of treasury, and on the first of April, he obtained leave of absence.

On the twenty-third of May, the senate of New York again convened, and on the twenty-seventh, they ordered the clerk to write to Mr. Floyd, and request his attendance in his place without delay. In compliance with this demand, he took his seat on the twentieth of June, and was appointed upon a joint committee to deliberate upon certain resolutions of congress, embracing all the most interesting relations existing between the state and general government. At this session, he strenuously opposed the pernicious principle of making the bills of credit a legal tender, in which he unhappily found himself in the minority. After a short adjournment, the senate was again convened on the seventh of September, and general Floyd was appointed upon the committee to draught a reply to the

governor's address. The want of adequate powers in the general congress had become the source of serious embarrassment, and the inconvenience was, very generally, both perceived and felt. The governor, in his address, had pointedly drawn the attention of the legislature to this subject; and the committee, in their reply, responded to his sentiments in the following forcible manner: "convinced from experience, that the want of adequate and defined powers in the directing council of the empire, has been productive of much embarrassment, prevented that union of force or council so essential to the weal of the confederacy, and evidently protracted the war, we will with great alacrity attempt to devise means, or concur in any which will conduce to accelerate the completion of such a confederation, as will confer on congress competent authority to draw from each member of the union, its proportion of aid for the common cause." In conformity with these views, a number of spirited resolutions were adopted before the close of the session, and ordered to be communicated to the other members of the confederacy.

On the twelfth of September, 1780, general Floyd was again elected a delegate to congress. He, however, continued his attendance in the senate, until they adjourned on the tenth of October.

and on the fourth of December, he resumed his seat in congress. As a delegate to this congress, he, with his colleagues from New York, had been authorized, by an act of the legislature, to designate the western limits of the state, and to cede to the United States their claim to the western territories. This, together with the contested claims of New York and New Hampshire to the territory now comprising the state of Vermont, involved him in a tedious and unpleasant official controversy, in which he perseveringly adhered to what he believed to be just, and due to the rights of the numerous individuals interested.

On the tenth of August, he nominated to congress Robert R. Livingston, Esq. to be secretary for foreign affairs, who was accordingly elected.

He was continued a delegate to congress by several successive appointments, and remained, with some short intermissions, a constant attendant until the twenty-sixth of April, 1783, when, having seen his country safely through a long and perilous war, he returned to his home after an exile of seven years. His return was hailed in his native county, with great demonstrations of joy; many, through his influence, had remained faithful to the cause under every trial, nor would they credit the restoration of peace, until they beheld him safely returned.

He found his estate despoiled of almost every thing but the naked soil, through the malice and cupidity of the tories, who had resorted thither for plunder. His private concerns now demanding more of his attention than comported with his duties as a delegate to congress, he declined a re-election. He was, however, by several successive elections, continued a member of the senate until the year 1788, when, upon the adoption of the federal constitution, he was elected a member of the first congress, which met in New York on the fourth day of March, 1789. At the expiration of his term of service he again declined a re-election.

During his long attendance in the senate of the state of New York, he maintained a high and enviable rank, and generally presided in that body when the lieutenant governor left the chair. Under the administration of governor Clinton, and associated with the honourable Lewis Morris, Ezra L'Hommedieu, Zephania Platt, David Gelston, Samuel Jones, and others of equal worth, he contributed his influence to the adoption of a code of laws, which placed the rights of persons and of property upon the most substantial and permanent basis, and elevated the character of the state, for the excellence of its laws and institutions, to a rank unrivalled in the confederacy.

Having enumerated the principal events of his public life, it is proper, in this place, to offer a few observations in relation to his character.

Philosophers, in analysing the human mind, have distributed men into two grand classes:—The one characterized particularly by practical and experimental skill, arising chiefly from a talent for minute, comprehensive, and rapid observation, a ready and retentive memory, and a presence of mind not to be disconcerted by extraordinary occurrences. The other comprehends what are called men of abstraction, or, in other words, philosophers. The latter unquestionably hold the highest rank in the scale of moral intelligence. The early education of general Floyd had not extended to the refinements of metaphysical science, and although his understanding was enriched with extensive reading, and stored with a great fund of useful knowledge, the early formation of his mind contributed to confirm the bent of his natural genius, which classed him unequivocally with the former. He was not of that number who astonish by the splendour of their conceptions, or amuse and interest us by the brilliancy of their fancy, and the ingenuity of their speculations. His thoughts were the representations of real existences, and his plans were regulated by a full view of their practicability; his reasoning was

the logic of nature, and his conclusions, the demonstrations of experience. Hence it arose, that in the accomplishment of his purposes, he seemed insensible to every difficulty; obstructions wasted away before his perseverance, and his resolution and firmness triumphed over every obstacle. He was remarkable for the justness of his observations, and the accuracy of his judgment, and many anecdotes are related of his coolness under sudden embarrassments. In his conduct, he was methodical, and particularly systematic in the observance of general principles, which seemed to be strongly defined in his mind; and every idea of transgressing them was banished from his thoughts.

His person was of a middle stature, with nothing particularly striking. But there was a natural dignity in his deportment, which never failed to impress beholders. As a politician, his integrity was unblemished, nor is it known that, during the height of party animosity, his motives were ever impeached. He seldom participated in debate; his opinions were the result of his own reflections, and he left others to the same resource. He pursued his object openly and fearlessly, and disdained to resort to artifice to secure its accomplishment. His political course was uniform and independent, and marked with a candour and sincerity which attracted the

approbation of those who differed from him in opinion. The most flattering commentary upon his public life will be found in the frequent and constant proofs of popular favour, which he received for more than fifty years.

In private life he was fond of society, but always observed a measured decorum, which repressed familiarity, and chilled every approach at intimacy. He was highly respected in the society in which he lived, and left to his descendants a name of which they will long be proud.

Having, in the year 1784, purchased a tract of land, then uninhabited, upon the Mohawk river, and finding himself more at leisure, he undertook the improvement of it, and although he was now at an advanced period of life, succeeded, after devoting several successive summers to that object, in transforming it into a number of well cultivated farms. The western portion of the state of New York was at this time emerging from the wilderness of nature, and, attracted by the extraordinary fertility of the soil, he determined, in the year 1803, to transfer his residence to his new estate.

In the year 1800, he was chosen one of the electors of president and vice president of the United States. His feelings had been excited by the conduct of the previous administration, endangering,

as he thought, the permanency of our institutions, and neither the precarious state of his health, the remonstrances of his friends, nor a journey of two hundred miles, in the month of December, could prevent him from attending, to support his early political friend and associate, Mr. Jefferson.

In 1801, he was elected a member of the convention to revise the constitution of the state of New York, and, at a subsequent period, served twice as presidential elector. At the earnest solicitation of his friends, he was once more elected a senator from the senatorial district into which he had removed, but, from the advanced period of his life, he was unable to bestow much attention to his public duties. In 1820, although he was unable, from the infirmities of age, to leave his home, he was again complimented with being named upon the electoral college.

His bodily strength and activity were remarkable for his years, and he enjoyed an almost uninterrupted state of health until a year or two before his death: his mental vigour remained unimpaired to the last. A short time previous to his demise, he complained of an unusual debility: on the first of August, 1821, he was affected with a partial stagnation in the current of the blood, and expired on the fourth, at the age of eighty-seven years. He

met death with a firmness characteristic of one who in his life had shrunk at nothing.

A decent tomb has been erected over his ashes; but his name is inscribed upon the more imperishable monument of his country's independence. Unlike the tablets of brass and of marble, which perpetuate the fame of their heroes in the places where they are deposited, it issues from the mausoleum, and proclaims the equal rights of man to the great moral intelligence of the human race. To the benighted victims of oppression,—a pillar of fire to light them in the path to liberty, and to the tyrants of the earth,—a scroll more appalling than that emblazoned upon the wall before Belshazzar, which caused the joints of his loins to be loosed, and his knees to smite together. It will long be held in veneration as the charter of their national existence, by a grateful people, and will never be forgotten so long as liberty has a friend, and man yields homage to the empire of reason.

GEORGE WALTON.

WALTON.

George Walton was born in Frederic county, in the province of Virginia, about the year 1740. The disadvantages which he encountered in early life, serve to render his subsequent successes more brilliant and extraordinary: and while they command an extended portion of our admiration, leave us to imagine the probable expansion of such a mind, had it been nurtured and directed by competent education. He neither was educated at any public school, nor received the benefits of classical knowledge, excepting his acquisitions at a mature age. He was apprenticed to a carpenter, who rigidly required the performance of his daily labour: nor would he allow him the use of a candle to pursue his readings at night. But his zeal for the acquisition of information was not to be checked by this privation. It was his practice to collect lightwood during the day, by the torch-light of which

he diligently pursued his studies until the expiration of his apprenticeship, at which period he found himself in possession of an ample share of knowledge, both practical and theoretical. He then removed into the province of Georgia, where he prosecuted the study of the law, under the superintendance of Henry Young, Esq., a gentleman who possessed a distinguished professional, as well as political, character. Having completed his studies, and attained a competent knowledge of the general principles of law, he embarked in his professional duties in the year 1774. His legal preceptor was opposed to the proceedings of the colonists, but the mind of Mr. Walton was too independent to be contaminated by his political opinions. From the commencement of the contest, he was a firm and zealous advocate in the cause of his native country: he never swerved from the principles which were, at this early period, planted in his breast, and always preserved, throughout his political career, the character of an honest, determined, and persevering patriot.

While the British government was in full operation in Georgia, and the governor supported by an executive council of great talents and firmness, the annexed notice, to which were attached the names of Noble W. Jones, Archibald Bullock, John Hous-

ton, and George Walton, appeared in a newspaper of Savannah:

"The critical situation to which the British colonies in America are likely to be reduced, from the alarming and arbitrary impositions of the late acts of the British parliament, respecting the town of Boston, as well as the acts at present, that extend to the raising of a perpetual revenue, without the consent of the people or their representatives, is considered as an object extremely important at this critical juncture; and particularly calculated to deprive the American subjects of their constitutional rights and liberties, as a part of the British empire. It is therefore requested, that all persons within the limits of this province do attend at the *Liberty Pole* at Tondee's tavern, in Savannah, on Wednesday the 27th instant, (July, 1774) in order that the said matters may be taken under consideration, and such other constitutional measures pursued, as may then appear to be most eligible."

The friends of these measures accordingly assembled at the Liberty Pole, which was planted in the centre of Broughton street, and a warm and animated debate ensued, in which Mr. Walton took a distinguished part. A committee was appointed to institute a correspondence with the different parishes, inviting them to co-operate, and unite

with the other provinces in America. Governor Wright and his council, opposed these energetic measures with that mild firmness which was best calculated to counteract them; and influential messengers were despatched to the different parishes, for the purpose of obtaining signatures to a solemn pledge in support of the royal cause.

On the twelfth of January, 1775, another meeting of the citizens was convened, at which the animated exertions and eloquence of Mr. Walton in the support of decisive measures, in unison with the other colonies, were again eminently conspicuous. But the warmth of feeling, and decision of character, which at that period characterized the incipient efforts of those who subsequently rose to elevated stations in the state, were not entertained by a majority of the meeting. Contrary to the wishes of the more determined patriots, they appeared determined to pursue that temporising policy which had previously been adopted, notwithstanding the repeated proofs of its inefficacy, and of the inattention and contempt with which the remonstrances of the colony had been received by the British ministry.

The disappointment and mortification of the friends of rational liberty were complete, when it was discovered that all their exertions would result

in the preparation of a petition to be submitted to the legislature, and presented to the king, by Dr. Franklin. Mr. Walton was a member of the committee by which it was prepared; but it participated in the fate of its numerous predecessors, and merely served to subject the inhabitants of Georgia to the same humiliation, which had been experienced in the other colonies;—the ministry of Great Britain, encouraged by the support of a large majority in parliament, and in conformity to the known inclinations of the king, appearing determined to enforce their schemes. The rejection and neglect of petitions, couched in the most loyal and respectful terms, gave a powerful impetus to the revolutionary principle which had then begun to be almost universally disseminated: they were insults in which every individual considered himself personally interested, and bound to resent. A conciliating policy would no doubt have satisfied the colonists, and continued them in subjection to the British crown for a longer period; but no policy, however profound, could have prevented the eventual emancipation of the people of this country. Increasing rapidly in population and wealth, they would soon have felt a confidence in their strength; and a knowledge of their rights would have impelled them to break the fetters which bound them to

the mother country. India may long remain in subjection to Great Britain; a nation of slaves, who find the yoke of foreign domination less galling than that of their native princes, will not easily be provoked to resistance; but a community of freemen, esteeming the right of self-government as important as it is incontrovertible, would have availed themselves of the first favourable moment to erect the standard of independence.

The legislature of Georgia assembled on the eighteenth of January, 1775, and the governor in his customary communication, recommended the temperate discussion of such subjects alone, which related to their duty as loyal subjects, and the submission which they owed to the crown. This body at length adjourned without transacting any business satisfactory to the British governor, or taking any decided steps in opposition to the royal government. Many local circumstances prevented the exposition of sentiments which might have proved fatal to a portion of the population. A thinly settled frontier, exposed to the barbarity and depredations of the Indians, restricted the resources of the people to the necessary defences of their own territories, and opposed the progress of their wishes and exertions in favour of the common cause. But amid this indifferent or hostile mass, a band of

determined spirits existed, whose views and exertions were not to be contracted by cold and interested calculations. The ardour by which they were animated did not relax under the most discouraging circumstances; on the contrary, the obstacles with which they were surrounded, seemed to impart fresh activity to their exertions. An unsuccessful meeting of the committee of safety was again held in Savannah, in the month of February: notwithstanding the earnest eloquence, and logical arguments, of those members who advocated the measure, the committee adjourned without establishing any plan for the election of delegates to congress. But the inhabitants of the parish of St. John, wearied with the numerous ineffectual attempts to induce a majority of the people of the province to unite with their sister colonies, resolved to display their own feelings of patriotism, and in some degree secede from the provincial government, by appointing a delegate to congress for the purpose of representing their particular parish. Lyman Hall was consequently elected, and admitted to a seat in that body, in May, 1775.

The progress of the revolution in the other colonies, soon rendered it necessary that Georgia should take a decided part, either in favour of, or in opposition to, the royal government. The cause

of liberty proved triumphant, notwithstanding the apprehensions excited by the Indians, whose friendship and support had been secured by the agents of the British government. Those who were exposed to the desolating fury of these barbarians, with the best inclination towards the colonial cause, entertained strong doubts of the policy of acting in conformity with their wishes. At length William Ewin, Esquire, was appointed president of a council of safety, with instructions to correspond with similar councils in the other provinces; and, in the month of July, 1775, the convention of Georgia acceded to the general confederacy, and elected Lyman Hall, Archibald Bullock, John Houston, John J. Zubly, and Noble W. Jones, delegates to represent the state in congress. The legislature again convened in January, 1776, and appointed Mr. Bullock president of the executive council. A majority of the members were now so strongly opposed to the royal government, that the communications of governor Wright were entirely disregarded. Having threatened a resort to military force, comprehending a few infantry, and five or six small armed vessels lying in the harbour of Savannah, the members of the legislature became justly indignant, and being firm in their decision not to be compelled to act, at the point of the bayonet, contrary to their

principles, and sense of duty, they resolved to seize the person of the governor. Colonel Joseph Habersham, one of the members, executed this order. The parole of the prisoner to confine himself within the limits of his own house, was accepted; but becoming, in a short time, dissatisfied with this mild and liberal arrangement, he broke his parole, escaped and took refuge on board the fleet, and subsequently made an unsuccessful attack upon the town.

On the second of February, 1776, the talents and integrity of Mr. Walton were fully recognised by the state legislature, which appointed him a delegate to congress: he was re-elected in the following month of October, and delivered his credentials on the twelfth of December, being the last day of the session in Philadelphia, previous to the adjournment of congress to Baltimore. On the twenty-first of December, the confidence reposed in him by his fellow-members was evinced by his appointment, in conjunction with Robert Morris and George Clymer, Esquires, on an important committee, invested with powers to transact such continental business as might be proper and necessary, in Philadelphia, from which city congress had thought it prudent to retire. Two hundred thousand dollars were placed at their disposal, for the purpose of

providing the militia going into service; for paying the soldiers from Ticonderoga; and for other proper public services: they were also empowered to call upon the commissioner of the loan-office for such further sums as the continental service might require. On the seventh of January, 1777, and twenty-sixth of February, 1778, he was successively re-elected, and on the fifteenth of May, 1780, he again took his seat among the sages of the revolution: it does not appear, however, that he was an acting member of the delegation in the year 1778. As a member of the board of treasury, of the marine committee, and of various minor committees, he displayed much zeal and intelligence. In October, 1781, he finally retired from the great national council, in whose proceedings he had so long and ably assisted.

In December, 1778, Mr. Walton was appointed a colonel of militia, and commanded a battalion on the right of general Howe's army, when Savannah was taken by the British troops, under colonel Campbell. This battalion sustained the attack, and made an obstinate defence, until colonel Walton received a wound through the thigh, fell from his horse, and was taken prisoner. He was paroled until he recovered from his wound, and then transferred to Sunbury, as a prisoner of war. The high

station of colonel Walton as a member of congress, and his signature to the declaration of independence, induced the British government to demand a brigadier general in exchange for him; but the term for which he was elected having expired, he was ultimately exchanged, as a lieutenant colonel, for a captain of the navy, in September, 1779.

After the unsuccessful siege of the combined armies, under the command of general Lincoln and count D'Estang, in October, 1779, the state legislature was convened at Augusta, when colonel Walton was appointed governor of the state. At the expiration of the session, which occurred in the succeeding January, he was elected a member of congress for two years.

At an early period of the war, discord and jealousy had been excited and fostered between the civil and military departments of the state government, then under the administration of president Gwinnett. The evils which this controversy appeared likely to create, had induced the members of congress from Georgia to request general Washington to order general M'Intosh, who commanded the continental troops, to join the grand army, and to supply his place with another officer of equal grade. This request having been complied with, M'Intosh was succeeded by general Howe; but the

beneficial effects expected to result from it, were not produced. In a letter, subsequently written by Mr. Walton to general M'Intosh, he observes that "the demon, discord, yet presides in this country, and God only knows when his reign will be at an end. I have strove," he continues, "so hard to do good with so poor a return, that, were the liberties of America secure, I would bid adieu to all public employment, to politics, and to strife; for even virtue itself will meet with enemies." A party in Savannah had formed themselves into a society, under the popular denomination of the liberty club, which had several branches in the different counties, acting under its jurisdiction. Their ostensible design was to prevent the encroachment of the military, upon the civil, authorities; but the confederacy at length became so numerous and powerful, as to possess the entire control over all public appointments.

During the session of the legislature in Augusta, a letter was forged, and transmitted to the president of congress, dated November 30th, 1779, of which the following is an extract: "It is to be wished that we could advise congress that the return of brigadier general M'Intosh gave satisfaction to either the militia, or confederates; but the common dissatisfaction is such, that it is highly necessary

that congress should direct some distant field for the exercise of his abilities." The name of the speaker of the house of representatives was affixed to this letter, but he explicitly disavowed it, and declared the signature to be a forgery. General M'Intosh charged Mr. Walton with an indirect participation in this imposture, by giving credence to the contents of the letter when it was submitted to congress, to the great injury of his military reputation. The documents, and proofs in support of this extraordinary accusation, were laid before the legislature of Georgia, in January, 1783, and the decision, as it is recorded upon the journals, exhibits a strange inconsistency, for which it is difficult to account. A resolution was passed, conveying a vote of censure upon the conduct of Mr. Walton, and recommending an order to the attorney general, to institute such proceedings against him as the case required. Now the same body had, on the preceding day, appointed Mr. Walton chief justice of the state of Georgia; and, therefore, he was chosen to preside over the only tribunal in the state that held cognizance over his own trial. At this period, judge Walton and general M'Intosh were respectively at the head of the civil and military departments in Georgia; and it is probable that the legislature wished to terminate and adjust the misunderstand-

ing, in such a manner as might prove least offensive to either: or, perhaps it was their desire to exhibit some evidences of a friendly disposition to both.

It is an irrefragable evidence of the great talents of Mr. Walton, and of their proper appreciation by the people of Georgia, that, during the remainder of his life, he held, in almost uninterrupted succession, the most respectable appointments that the government could confer upon him. There are, indeed, few men in the United States, upon whom more extensive and solid proofs of public confidence have been lavished. He was six times elected a representative to congress;—twice, governor of the state;—once, a senator of the United States;—and four times, judge of the superior courts: the latter office he held during fifteen years, and until the day of his death. He was one of the commissioners on the part of the United States, to negociate a treaty with the Cherokee Indians in Tennessee, and several times a member of the state legislature.

One of the principal duties of the biographer is to convey an idea of the peculiar traits which mark the character of his subject. From an early period of his life to its close, Mr. Walton was as warm in his attachments as in his enmities: he possessed no mixture of that temporizing policy, so frequently

successful in gaining the confidence of mankind. There was a dignified sternness in his manners, which evinced a contempt for the world in general; but towards talents and merit, he was scrupulously respectful and attentive. His temper would not permit him to brook, with impunity, the slightest indignity offered to his official stations. Although not addicted to pedantry, he was accustomed to use a language in some degree varying from the common style of conversation, and was partial to short and comprehensive sentences. His talent for satire, either personal or political, particularly in the productions of his pen, was very great. Satire is a weapon which, in unskillful hands, is often more injurious to its possessor than to the objects of its attack: a personal application of it is seldom proper, and can never be made without creating enemies. But, when legitimately employed in lashing the vices, or exposing the follies of the age, it is a powerful auxiliary in the cause of virtue, and is often more successful in their correction, than the most convincing arguments drawn from reason and morality. The passions of Mr. Walton were easily excited, and, although it is apprehended that they sometimes led to the indulgence of his satirical propensity beyond the strict rules of propriety, his

good sense prevented him from exercising it in such a manner as to create frequent offence.

His habitual reserve in relation to the multitude and uniform disregard of public opinion, when that opinion appeared to him to be incorrect, is a strong proof of the extent of his talents, and of the confidence of his fellow citizens, which enabled him to overcome what would, in most cases, have been fatal obstacles to political elevation.

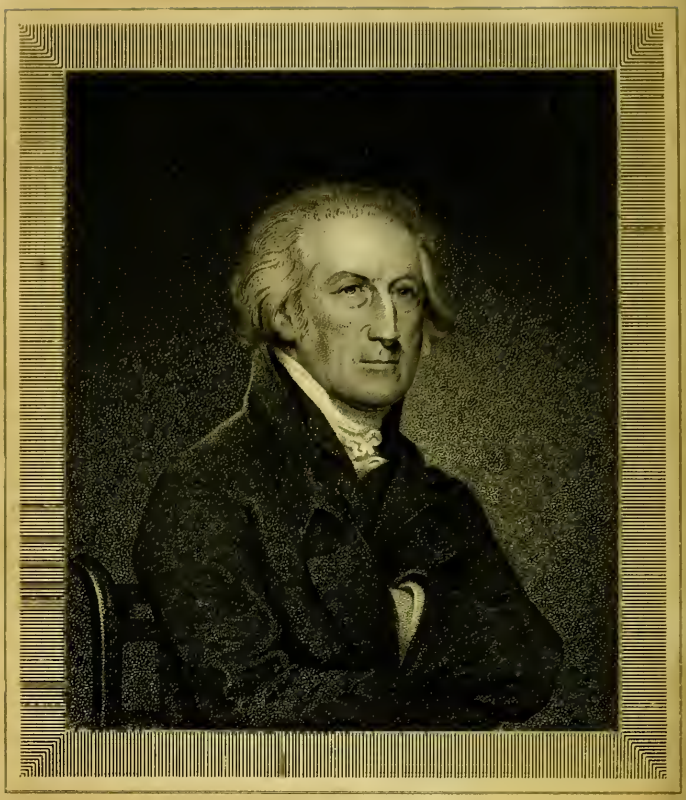
Mr. Walton was not very abstemious in his manner of living, and his partiality for study imparted a sedentary habit at an early period of life; hence, before he attained its meridian, he was afflicted with the gout, which caused him much suffering during his declining years. When severely tormented with this painful disease, he found in his library a solace and enjoyment for his mind, which had a tendency to soften its acuteness; and he frequently remarked to his physicians, that "a book was the most effectual remedy." He was partial to the society of students, from whom, he observed, that he often obtained useful information. He delighted in opening the youthful mind, and contemplating the inchoation of genius;—to assist its incipient efforts, and (to use one of his own expressions), "put the young beagle upon the track in the chase."

In the year 1777, he married Miss Dorothea Camber, who is now living, and who participated with him in the distressing effects produced by the revolutionary war. A single son only survives, who bears his father's name: he lately filled the office of secretary of state for West Florida, under the administration of governor Andrew Jackson, and is said to have discharged the duties of his station with honour to himself, and much to the satisfaction of the general government.

Mr. Walton was not rich, but his means were sufficient to support the dignity of his official stations, and to enable him to enjoy the comforts and conveniences of life: he lived upon the moderate proceeds of office, and the produce of a small farm. The accumulation of wealth occupied but a small portion of his attention; his mind was continually occupied in public affairs, and he never evinced a disposition to devote it to the improvement of his fortune.

On the second of February, 1804, he closed his useful and laborious life in Augusta, leaving, in the memory of his actions and his accomplishments, a lasting monument of his worth, and a rich legacy to his country.

GEORGE CLYMER.



GEORGE CLYMER.

Engraved by J.B.Longacre from an original miniature by Trott

CLYMER.

The profession of the law is, in this country, the most certain path to political distinction, not only from the influence which fluency of speech confers, but from the intimate connexion existing between law and politics. At the dawn, and during the meridian, of the revolution, this distinction was less manifest, although, in the aggregate, the gentlemen of the bar maintained and merited a powerful preponderance. But, among the illustrious men who flourished in those perilous times, the merchant, the physician, the farmer, the mechanic, and the sailor, frequently acted a conspicuous part. The spirit of patriotism, like that of religion, is not circumscribed in its operations; it honours and elevates the object in which it appears, whatever may be his situation in society, and imparts a zeal and dignity to his exertions, which, without that incentive, the most gifted minds would be unable to at-

tain. Hence, in the contemplation of the incipient efforts, and political rise, of many of the founders of our political independence, we have seen the merchant abandon his commercial interests; the physician, his practice; the farmer, his plough; the mechanic, his trade; and the sailor, his ship; for the purpose of devoting their time and talents to the common interests of their country. At the present day, when the unalterable influence of time has softened the sentiments which such sacrifices ought to create, it is impossible to form a proper estimate of the self-devotion of our forefathers, without recurring, mentally and fully, to the times in which they flourished, and to the honourable privations which they endured. It is by translating ourselves, as it were, to the memorable epoch of the great revolutionary struggle, and making ourselves hypothetical participators in the dangers and sufferings of those who were engaged in it, that we can alone appreciate the disinterested patriotism, and dauntless devotion, which guided their exertions. The ingratitude of republics is proverbial: happy, as we are, in the enjoyment of all those blessings inseparably connected with freedom, and conscious that they emanated from a band of men whose prototypes are unknown in history, we are too prone to be satisfied with the happiness which we

enjoy, without reverting to the self-denial and fearless perseverance which produced it. To arouse the feelings and gratitude of the American community, by affording a retrospect of the individual exertions which tended to establish their present political elevation, is a duty, in the performance of which, the performer and the public ought to be equally interested.

George Clymer, whose name is affixed to the declaration of independence, was descended from a respectable family of Bristol, in England. His father immigrated to this country, and settled in Philadelphia, where he married. Mr. Clymer was born in that city, in the year 1739, and the decease of his parents left him an orphan at the early age of seven years. The want of parental protection was, however, fully and affectionately supplied by the guardianship of his uncle, William Coleman, Esquire, whose character and acquirements had elevated him to a high rank among the citizens of Philadelphia. His precepts and example were, therefore, eminently calculated to establish the principles of Mr. Clymer upon a proper model, and his extensive library afforded him all the advantages of reading, and consequent reflection. He derived great literary benefit from being under the tuition of such a man, who, independent of general

respectability, possessed a highly cultivated mind, and was particularly distinguished for his knowledge in the mathematics.

Mr. Clymer was educated in Philadelphia, under the superintendence of Mr. Coleman, with whom he lived until the time of his marriage, and the principal part of whose fortune he inherited. After the completion of his studies, he entered the compting-room of his uncle for the purpose of acquiring a knowledge of mercantile pursuits. He possessed, however, little taste for this employment, his inclination leading him to the cultivation of his mind. When he had attained the proper age, he connected himself in business with Mr. Robert Ritchie, and, at a subsequent period, with his father-in-law, and brother-in-law, under the firm of Meredith's and Clymer. After the decease of the elder Mr. Meredith, the business was conducted by the two surviving partners, until about the year 1782, when it was discontinued.

Although the early loss of his parents, the circumstances of his education, and the profession of his uncle, led him to embark in the pursuits of commerce, he was uniformly and decidedly opposed to it: he disliked it from its peculiar precariousness, and the necessary dependance which the merchant must place in the honour and integrity of others,

thereby removing, to a certain degree, the conduct of his affairs beyond his immediate control. Hence he successfully discouraged his children from entering into mercantile affairs. He maintained, that equal gain and loss might balance in the books but not in the mind; that gain imparted a sudden elevation to the spirits, which soon descended to their ordinary level, while loss depressed the spirits, which did not so easily rise again; that, therefore, these considerations furnished an argument against that business, or course of life, which subjected the individual to such a variety of fortune, because there was more to lose than to win in it.

It is too often our lot to contemplate with renewed but ineffectual regret, the deficiency of knowledge relative to the early years of many of our political fathers. The inquisitive mind, while it dwells with animation upon their achievements, seeks in vain to discover the ripening of the germe, or gather instruction at the fountain-head of their usefulness. The early developments of those minds, which, in their rich maturity, shed throughout the land the rays of liberty and political light, are best adapted to incite the dawning exertions of the patriot, and guide the course of his mental improvement. Hence their loss is not restricted to the deficiencies which they create in the narrative of the

genius and virtues of the individual to whom they relate, but includes that of a model which would have extended its benefits to every branch of our political society. But, while we regret the deficiency, we cannot but observe that it proceeded from the most simple cause. In the youthful days of our distinguished forefathers, the dependence of this country upon Great Britain, was firmly established, and the idea of emancipation was not, perhaps, in one solitary instance indulged. Hence the flight of ambition was restricted, and the highest distinctions of the colonies had been enjoyed by a great number of individuals. Honours, in which a multitude participate, are prone to depreciate in the public view, and continue to confer decreasing distinction. Under these circumstances, however noble may have been the efforts, and flattering the prospects, of the aspiring youth, there was a boundary beyond which he could not pass, and a colonial subjection which dictated the path and the limits of his political elevation. It was not to be expected that the youthful days of individuals, whose early genius and talents predicted, on a proper theatre, the most extended usefulness and honours, could have attracted a great portion of attention beyond the domestic circle, when the course of their future career was limited to distinctions, which a multitude

of predecessors had enjoyed. If the storm of the revolution had been then heard, even afar off, the hopes of the people would have rested upon those best calculated, by their mental vigour, to lead them through the mazes of an untried scene; but the idea of independence was then unknown, and the great actors in the times of peril which succeeded, had, in general, matured the genius which their youthful days had elicited, before they were summoned to enrol themselves among men, whose elevation was unrestricted by the yoke of slavery.

To this cause we may, in a great measure, attribute the darkness which hangs over the early days of Mr. Clymer; and the knowledge we possess only leads us more to lament the loss of that which is forever "buried in the dark backward and abysm of time." He acquired the habit of reading and reflection at an early age, and was distinguished for the clearness and originality of his conceptions, and the soundness of his understanding. He read with close attention, and frequently committed the result of his reflections to paper. Although not intended for any of the learned professions, he extended his course of studies to those branches of knowledge which contributed to the general improvement of his mind: he thus became acquainted with the general principles of law, and in the course of this

particular study, more firmly fixed them upon his remembrance, by making a compendium of Blackstone's Commentaries. He was well versed in history, but his mind entertained, from the earliest period, a strong bias towards politics and agriculture, as those branches of science which he supposed would more materially conduce to the happiness and prosperity of his country, to the promotion of which his mind was undeviatingly directed.

In the year 1765, when about twenty-seven years of age, he married Miss Elizabeth Meredith, the eldest daughter of Reese Meredith, Esquire, one of the principal merchants of Philadelphia. He was an early emigrant from Bristol, in England, and possessed a generous and elevated mind. The following interesting anecdote affords a distinct view of his character and feelings: when general Washington was a very young man, and before he had attained any distinction, he visited Philadelphia, and made his appearance at the coffee house, where he had not a single acquaintance, and was, therefore, entirely unnoticed. Mr. Meredith coming in, and finding a stranger in this awkward situation, went up to him, took him by the hand, inquired his name, introduced himself, took him to his house, and behaved with so much kindness and hospitality, as not only to induce him to continue

at Mr. Meredith's house while he remained in the city, but ever after to make it his home when he visited Philadelphia. During a long course of years, the matrimonial connexion of Mr. Clymer subsisted in uninterrupted harmony, and served mutually to mitigate the feelings arising from domestic afflictions and bereavements.

The period was now rapidly approaching when genius was to find its proper level, and patriotism was to be no longer enchained. The principles of Mr. Clymer speedily designated him as one of those who were destined to direct the coming storm;—to emerge in triumph from the conflict, or sink fearlessly beneath its fury. His firmness and his talents pointed him out as a man who would not, in case of defeat, owe his safety to his obscurity, but as one who would hazard his dearest interests in the cause, and either live as a freeman, or perish as a patriot. He was a republican from principle, and his heart glowed with indignation against the oppressions that were practised, and still more against those that were meditated, towards this country. He was, therefore, among the first who embarked in opposition to the arbitrary acts, and unjust pretensions, of Great Britain. He diligently attended all the private and public meetings, which, at that early day, were held by the friends of the

cause, and manifested an ardent and persevering zeal in its support. When conciliatory measures were found unavailing, and it became necessary to arm in defence of the colonies, he accepted the appointment of captain in a company of volunteers, and continued to hold that commission until he was compelled, by his civil, and more urgent duties, to resign it. General Cadwallader, to whose brigade he was attached, expressed great regret at his retirement from military pursuits.

In the year 1773, when the importation of tea into America on account of the British East India Company, produced an universal excitement, the citizens of Philadelphia warmly adopted those measures which were best calculated to resist the operations of the measure, by preventing the sale of the tea. At a numerous meeting, held on the sixteenth day of October, a series of spirited resolutions, for the purpose of restraining the sale, were unanimously adopted. They maintained, that the disposal of their own property was the inherent right of freemen, and that the claim of parliament to tax America, was, in other words, a claim of right to levy contributions at pleasure; that the duty imposed on tea landed in America, was levying contributions on the Americans without their consent; that the express purpose for which the tax

was levied, namely, for the support of government, administration of justice, and defence of his majesty's dominions in America, had a direct tendency to render assemblies useless, and to introduce arbitrary government and slavery; that a virtuous and steady opposition to this ministerial plan of governing America, was absolutely necessary to preserve even the shadow of liberty, and was a duty which every freeman in America owed to his country, to himself, and to his posterity; that the resolution entered into by the East India Company to send out their tea to America, subject to the payment of duties on its being landed, was an open attempt to enforce the ministerial plan, and a violent attack upon the liberties of America; that it was the duty of every American to oppose that attempt; that, whoever should directly, or indirectly countenance the attempt, or in anywise aid or abet in unloading, receiving, or vending, the tea sent, or to be sent out, by the East India Company, whilst it remained subject to the payment of a duty, was an enemy to his country; and, finally, that a committee should be immediately chosen to wait on those gentlemen who, according to report, were appointed by the East India Company, to receive and sell the said tea, and to request them, from a regard to their own characters, and the peace and good order

of the city and province, immediately to resign their appointments.

Mr. Clymer strongly advocated these energetic measures, and was appointed chairman of the committee. However unpleasant may have been the duty thus assigned to him, the importance of its proper performance did not permit him to hesitate a moment in demanding a resignation of the offensive appointments. The commissions had been sent to three of the principal mercantile houses in Philadelphia, two of which, with praise-worthy alacrity, coincided in the wishes of the committee. The cautious and temporising conduct of the other commissioners, excited strong animadversions, but they were at length induced to submit to the popular opinion.

When the growing dangers of the times rendered it necessary to appoint a council of safety, Mr. Clymer was chosen a member of it, and performed the duties of his station with great activity and decision. His inflexible patriotism and integrity, and the unqualified confidence reposed in him by all those with whom he was associated in the public councils, pointed him out to congress as a fit person to be entrusted with the care of the public monies, and he was accordingly appointed one of the first continental treasurers, in conjunction with Michael

Hillegas, on the twenty-ninth of July, 1775. This office he continued to fill with care and fidelity, notwithstanding the multiplicity of his other concerns, until shortly after his first appointment to congress, when he sent in his resignation, on the sixth of August, 1776, being resolved to devote his undivided attention to the more important interests of his country.

To the loan opened for the purpose of rendering the opposition to the measures of the British more effective, he was one of the first to subscribe; exchanging, in the most disinterested manner, all his specie resources for continental currency. The warmth of his zeal for the promotion of the loan, was also manifested in his successful exertions in procuring subscriptions among his friends. His devotion to the cause of the colonists, appeared, at this period, to have been marked with the greatest enthusiasm; he made a kind of pilgrimage to Boston, for the purpose, as it is believed, of imbibing fresh draughts of the love of liberty from the fountain-head, and of animating his own patriotism by contemplating the virtuous and spirited opposition of that portion of the country.

Being one among the first to feel and acknowledge the necessity of a total separation from the mother country, he was appointed, on the twentieth

of July, 1776, in conjunction with Doctor Benjamin Rush, James Wilson, George Ross, and George Taylor, Esquires, to succeed those members of the Pennsylvania delegation, who had refused their assent to the declaration of independence, and abandoned their seats in congress. From this circumstance it arose, that the new members who were elected as acknowledged advocates of the measure, were not present when that memorable instrument was agreed upon by congress. Mr. Clymer, however, affixed his signature to the enduring manifesto, as if in the performance of an act which was about to consummate his dearest wishes, and realise those fond prospects of national prosperity which had ever been transcendent in his thoughts. While the feeble bonds which still united the colonies to the mother country were permitted to exist, an almost undefinable species of depression and uncertainty continued to haunt the minds of the American community, and even extended its influence to those who were most zealous and active in the cause. But when the Rubicon was passed;—when the proudest and noblest monument of political wisdom and sagacity was promulgated to the world;—when the solemn declaration of our wrongs, and the firm assertion of our rights, had gone forth to be venerated, and admired;—when the declaration

of independence had given us a rank amongst nations, strengthened the wavering, confirmed those principles already established, and overawed the disaffected;—when this deed of daring was accomplished,—a new spirit was diffused throughout every ramification of society, the title of rebel was exchanged for a more exalted character, and the self-devotion evinced by the promoters of the measure, was met by a correspondent firmness and enthusiasm on the part of the people.

On the twenty-sixth of September, 1776, Mr. Clymer was appointed, together with Mr. Stockton, to visit Ticonderoga, to which place he immediately proceeded, to inspect the affairs of the northern army. The continued approbation of congress sufficiently testifies the faithful performance of that confidential service. Having an entire confidence in the commander-in-chief of our armies, he uniformly promoted every measure that was the least calculated to extend the powers, and assist the views, of that great man; a course of conduct, the policy and utility of which was variously manifested during the war.

When congress, on the approach of the British army through New Jersey, considered it necessary to adjourn to Baltimore, in December, 1776, a committee consisting of Robert Morris, George Walton,

and Mr. Clymer, was appointed, with powers to execute such continental business in Philadelphia, as might be considered proper and necessary. A large sum of money was committed to their charge, for such public uses as they should think proper, with powers to call upon the commissioner of the loan-office, for such further sums as the continental service might require. At this period, the family of Mr. Clymer resided in Chester county, twenty-five miles distant from Philadelphia; but so strictly did he devote his time to the objects of his appointment, that when he paid them a visit, he left the city late in the afternoon, and returned in the morning.

On the twelfth of March, 1777, he was re-elected to congress, and continued to be an active and efficient member of that body, until the nineteenth of May following, when the effects of his unremitting exertions compelled him to obtain leave of absence for the recovery of his health. His services on committees, the most arduous of congressional duties, were frequent and persevering, and he acted with fidelity as a member of the boards of war, and of the treasury. On the ninth of April, he was appointed, with others, to consider the proper steps to be immediately taken by congress, and recommended to the state of Pennsylvania, for opposing

the enemy, if they should attempt to penetrate through New Jersey, or to attack Philadelphia. On the eleventh of July, 1777, he was appointed, together with Mr. P. Livingston and Mr. Gerry, to proceed to the army under the command of general Washington, to institute a diligent inquiry into the state of that army, particularly as it related to the causes of complaint in the commissary's department; and to make such provision as the exigency or importance of the case required.

At a meeting of the general assembly of Pennsylvania, held on the fourteenth September, 1777, Mr. Clymer was not re-elected to congress, although he served, for a time, after that period. During the fall of this eventful year, when the British army, landing at the Head of Elk, defeating general Washington on the Brandywine, were marching towards Philadelphia, the family of Mr. Clymer resided in Chester county, to which place they had retired for safety, while the British were penetrating through New Jersey. The change of measures adopted by the enemy, however, threw them into the very scene of danger, and at the instigation of certain domestic traitors, their retreat was pointed out, and the house sacked by a band of British marauders. All the furniture, and a large stock of liquors were destroyed, and such casks of

wine as they were unable to consume or convey away, were poured upon the floors of the cellars. Mr. Clymer, however, firm in his devotion to his country, especially at a period which required the exertions of every individual, would not permit his private affairs to interfere with his public duties. Neither the destruction of his property nor the derangement of his family, nor the calls for his attendance upon them during their flight, aggravated as it was by sickness, could allure him from the public cause, and councils. Another proud testimonial of the fervent patriotism of Mr. Clymer, and of the peculiarly hostile estimation in which his indefatigable services were held by the enemy, was evinced when the British took possession of Philadelphia. They were so exasperated against him, that they resolved to tear down his house, and assembled for that purpose, at the abode of his aunt, in Cherry street, which they believed to be his property. Being, however, assured of their mistake, they fortunately desisted.

In the year 1777, an inroad was made on the western frontiers of Virginia and Pennsylvania by some savage tribes of Indians, during which a number of helpless people were barbarously massacred, and the peaceable inhabitants driven from their homes and reduced to great distress. These atro-

cious acts were committed at the instigation of British agents and emissaries, who also excited a dangerous spirit of disaffection among worthless and evil-disposed individuals on the frontiers, and induced them to aid the enemy in their barbarous warfare. The Shawanese and Delaware Indians continued well affected, and disposed to preserve the league of peace and amity entered into with the American congress, and were, on that account, threatened with an attack by their hostile neighbours. It having thus become necessary to adopt measures for the safety of the frontiers, as well as to preserve the public faith plighted to our Indian allies, congress resolved to appoint three commissioners to proceed to fort Pitt, with instructions to investigate the rise, progress, and extent, of the disaffection in that quarter, and take measures for suppressing it, and for bringing the people to a sense of their duty. The powers of this committee, consisting of colonel Samuel Washington, Gabriel Jones, Esquire, and Mr. Clymer, were very extensive. They were authorised to suspend any officers in the service of the United States, employed in that quarter, and appoint others in their room, and to confine in safe custody all such officers against whom they could procure satisfactory proof of their being offenders against the rights and liberties of

America;—to engage and cultivate the friendship of the Shawanese and Delaware Indians, and enlist as many of their warriors as they might deem convenient, in the service of the United States;—to concert with brigadier general Hand, a plan for carrying the war into the enemy's country, and cause the same to be speedily executed;—to extend the operations of the war, under certain provisions, against the British garrison at Detroit. It was also earnestly recommended to the legislatures of Virginia and Pennsylvania, to invest the commissioners with every necessary authority over their respective militias, and to empower them to arrest and commit for trial such of their respective inhabitants on the western frontiers, as might appear to have been concerned in any conspiracy against the United States.

Mr. Clymer was appointed to this important and confidential service on the eleventh of December, 1777, and a few days after, accepted the appointment. At this period the enemy was in possession of Philadelphia, and congress was assembled in Yorktown; Mr. Clymer then resided on the Susquehannah river, from whence he departed, in the beginning of the year 1778, to perform the duties of his mission. The non-attendance of the other commissioners greatly obstructed the accomplish-

ment of the objects for which they had been appointed; the following extract of a letter from Mr. Clymer, dated Pittsburgh, twenty-first April, 1778, shows the unsupported situation in which he was placed, and the improbability of a successful result to his labours:

"Many a melancholy moment have I had in reflecting that I was at so great a distance from those so dear to me: I do not, indeed, repent my coming here, because I have been in the discharge of my duty, although, after all, little good, I believe, will proceed from it. If others had shown the same readiness, there would possibly have been a very different scene of things from the present. The Indians have broke out again, and about sixty miles from hence, have done considerable mischief, and there is no present remedy to apply,—the inhabitants being too spiritless or too sullen to assemble to oppose them."

Mr. Clymer, however, in conjunction with Messrs. Matthews and M'Dowell, proceeded to perform his duties, by searching into the existing causes of disaffection, and examining such individuals as were suspected of being hostile to the interests of the country. He also engaged, to the extent of his power, in the general objects of the mission, although, from various causes, his exertions

were not fully crowned with success. The commissioners having terminated their labours, advised congress of the result on the twenty-seventh of April, from which it appeared that the cruelties already exercised were merely the commencement of an Indian war, instigated by the British, and persevered in by the savages from a belief, industriously inculcated by the enemy, that the forbearance of the United States resulted from their inability to revenge the outrages which had been committed. Congress therefore resolved to take the most energetic measures for the reduction of Detroit, and the conquest of the Indians, by levying a large body of men, and carrying the war into the enemy's country.

While Mr. Clymer resided at Pittsburgh, he experienced a narrow escape from the tomahawk of the enemy. He was riding to the house of general Neville, situated at some distance from the town. There was a division in the road, both branches of which led to his place of destination, but his good fortune prevailing, he selected that which conducted him in safety to it; for on the same day, and at the same period of it, a white man was murdered by an Indian on the road which Mr. Clymer had rejected.

In the year 1780, the disasters in the southern states had created universal depression, and the commander-in-chief found himself surrounded with difficulties of the most alarming nature. His pressing requisitions for men were uncomplied with, and his troops were with difficulty prevented from perishing with cold and hunger. In the beginning of the year, a number of the patriotic citizens of Philadelphia, with the view of relieving this distress, and preventing the disbanding of the army, which was seriously apprehended, established a bank for the sole purpose of supplying and transporting three millions of rations, and three hundred hogsheads of rum for the use of the army. No pecuniary advantages were to be derived from this undertaking, and the establishment of a bank was merely intended to facilitate the transaction. Information of this generous and disinterested offer being communicated to congress, on the twenty-second of June, 1780, it was received with the highest marks of approbation. It was immediately resolved, that, as on the one hand, the associators, animated to this laudable exertion by a desire to relieve the national necessities, did not intend to derive from it the least pecuniary advantage, so, on the other, it was just and reasonable that they should be fully reimbursed and indemnified; that the congress enter-

tained a high sense of the liberal offer of the associators, which they accepted as a distinguished proof of their patriotism; that the faith of the United States should be pledged to the subscribers to the bank, for their effectual reimbursement and indemnity; and, that bills for 150,000*l.* sterling on the American ministers in Europe, should be deposited in the bank in support of its credit, and as an indemnity to the subscribers. Mr. Clymer was among the most active and efficient members of this association, and one of those gentlemen selected to preside over the institution. Although its powerful and happy effects are now nearly forgotten, they were extensively and gratefully felt at the time, and it continued to promote the resources of the war until the establishment of the bank of North America, at the suggestion of Robert Morris.

In November, 1780, Mr. Clymer received from the speaker of the Pennsylvania assembly, an official notice of his third election to congress. On the succeeding day, he resumed his seat in the great council of the nation, and displayed the same activity, intelligence, and perseverance, which had characterised his previous exertions in the discharge of his congressional duties. From this time to the twelfth of November, 1782, comprehending a space of nearly two years, he devoted himself so

faithfully and indefatigably to the public service, that he was not absent more than a few weeks from his seat, a portion of which was employed in the business of congress. It is impossible to specify the number of committees upon which he served, and the vast variety of current business, in the transaction of which he displayed so much shrewdness and ability; but his well known capacity attracted a large share of the confidence of congress, and gave him little time to attend to his private affairs, or indulge in the ease and enjoyments of domestic life.

When the plan for establishing a national bank was submitted to congress by the financier, it received the undivided support of Mr. Clymer, who was appointed, together with John Nixon, Esquire, to receive the subscriptions. He always evinced the most decided interest in the prosperity of this institution, which, under the guidance of an able director, had become a most powerful support of the American cause, and relieved the distresses of the army in one of the most gloomy and appalling epochs of the revolution. At a subsequent period, when he held a seat in the legislature of the state, his indignation was highly excited at the opposition made to the renewal of the charter of the bank, which had been repealed by the preceding assembly. Being one of the committee to which the me-

morial of the citizens of Philadelphia praying for a renewal of the charter, was referred, he did not restrain his honest feelings, being regardless of consequences when in the discharge of his duty.

At the representations of Mr. Morris, the superintendant of the finances, it was considered necessary, by congress, to adopt more active measures to procure from the several states their quotas for the purposes of the war. Mr. Clymer hence received a renewed pledge of the confidence of congress, by being appointed, on the twenty-second of May, 1782, with Mr. Rutledge, to repair to the several southern states, and to make such representations as were best adapted to their several circumstances, and might induce them to carry the requisitions of congress into effect with the greatest despatch.

In November, 1782, Mr. Clymer, having retired from his seat in congress, removed his family to Princeton, in New Jersey, for the purpose of educating his children at Nassau-Hall. The prospects of the country had brightened, and, believing the objects of the war to be on the point of consummation, he considered that his assistance was no longer necessary, and that, after so much toil and trouble, he could honourably retire to the enjoyments of domestic life. The strong affection which he entertained for his children would not, under such

circumstances, admit of a separation, and he, therefore, resolved to transfer his whole family to Princeton, where their education was to be completed. His removal into another state distinctly proves how little personal ambition was mingled with his patriotic exertions. He had, for many years, laboured with indefatigable ardour for the attainment of one glorious object, and when that object was about to be realized, he abandoned the political rewards which he had, in a conspicuous manner, merited, and retired from the walks of public life.

The proud and happy consciousness of having acted well his part, at a time when duty was danger, and hesitation, disgrace, crowned the retirement of Mr. Clymer with happiness and honour. To one who had been tossed about amidst turmoils and troubles, and whose mind had been in a constant state of political agitation, for many years, it must indeed have been a sweet and consoling gratification to sit down calmly in the bosom of his family, reflecting upon the deeds which he had done, and smiling upon the happiness around him. But the principle of public duty retained all its pristine vigour, and an intimation that his services were required in his native state, was all-sufficient to call it into action, and cause him to abandon the quietude

of Princeton, for new honours and new scenes in Philadelphia.

In the year 1784, the spirit of party distracted the state of Pennsylvania, and those who held the helm of government appeared neither calculated to assuage the animosities, nor promote the prosperity, of the people. Great exertions were, therefore, made by the real friends of the country, in opposition to the constitutionalists, the prevailing party, who derived their name from the active support which they gave to the old constitution, which was justly deemed deficient. The high-handed, and severe measures adopted by that government are fresh in the recollection of our readers, who have no doubt regretted a severity of legal execution, as malignant as it was unnecessary. To aid in opposing this party and these principles, Mr. Clymer was summoned, from his Princeton retirement, in the fall of 1784; and at the ensuing election was appointed to the legislature, to co-operate with the Hon. Robert Morris and Thomas Fitzsimmons, Esq. in relation to that important object.

We need not trace the steps of Mr. Clymer throughout the whole course of his career in the assembly of Pennsylvania. He trode in the same undeviating path which led him to distinction in the general council of the nation. The same principles

of political probity were the foundation of all his thoughts and actions. Independent of all guide but his own conscience, indefatigable in the promotion of public good, and inexorable in his opposition to those who endeavoured to retard it, he became one of the most useful and influential members of the house. As a constant member of committees, the organs by which the business of almost all legislative bodies is conducted, he performed his various duties with cool and characteristic perseverance. Upon all occasions which appeared particularly to claim his co-operation, his abilities were conspicuous, and in the transaction of minor affairs, he was diligent and considerate.

A measure of sound and humane policy was adopted by the legislature, during the membership of Mr. Clymer, which conferred a large share, not only of legislative, but of christian, honour upon those who supported it. To Mr. Clymer, then, who originated that measure, a larger and a brighter portion of praise is due; and it must, in after life, have ever been to him a soothing reflection, that he had given birth to a system which mitigated the sufferings, while it checked the vices, of his fellow-creatures.

The sanguinary nature of the penal code of Pennsylvania, had long been deprecated by those citi-

zens opposed to the destruction of human life under any pretext whatever, and by those, who, admitting the right and necessity in extreme cases, believed that sound policy demanded its modification. Among the latter was Mr. Clymer. His strong mind, seizing the mode of alleviation, never relaxed its grasp until it triumphed in its adoption. The measure, however, was not submitted to the consideration of the house by himself: his retiring modesty seldom permitted him to court notice by going forward himself, when he could obtain others to act as his representatives. It appears to have been a systematic plan with him, to conceive useful projects, and grant their execution to others, being always willing to play a second part, provided the matters in which he was interested, were properly performed. A committee being appointed of which he was a member, a report was drawn up by him and submitted to the consideration of the house, strenuously recommending an amelioration of the penal code, and the abolishment of capital punishments in all cases excepting those of the most flagrant nature.

Mr. Clymer laboured with untiring perseverance in support of this humane and salutary measure. On few occasions of his life did he exert himself more warmly and ably in the accomplishment of what he considered an important object. Although

a zealous friend to the great principles of the law, he was strongly opposed to those details in it, which, without amendment, were calculated to destroy its usefulness. On the present occasion, he maintained, that the fittest punishment of a criminal was that which, when meditated upon at the time, would be most likely to deter him from the commission of it: and in this view he believed that the contemplation of a long imprisonment would be of more effect than that of death. As a matter of distant contingency, we are apt to despise death, though we should tremble at the least chance of a long imprisonment: indeed, were the alternatives to be submitted to our choice, as immediate certainties, such is our nature, that we should shrink more from the thoughts of death, than of imprisonment. This is the light in which he maintained that the question should be considered, in constructing a criminal code. Laws should be preventive more than vindicative. He also insisted, with Gibbon, that whenever the offence inspires less horror than the punishment, the rigour of penal law is obliged to give way to the common feelings of mankind; and with Robertson, that amongst people of corrupted morals, maxims of jurisprudence too severe and unrelenting, by rendering men ferocious and desperate, would be more apt to multiply crimes than to restrain them.

Nor did he fail to urge that the sight of human suffering tends to extinguish sensibility, and suppress the feelings of nature.

Such were the main principles which guided Mr. Clymer in his endeavours to ameliorate the penal laws of Pennsylvania; and thus he became peculiarly instrumental in causing her to act with a salutary indulgence to her own misguided sons, and to set an example of humanity to mankind. The policy was sound, as well as humane: it has resisted the attacks of those who were blindly attached to the former system; it has triumphantly stood the test of experience; it has been adopted by some of her sister-states, and is daily gaining ground in other parts of the world.

Mr. Clymer vigorously opposed certain additions to the penal code, as destructive to its proper effect: he deprecated the exposure of criminals, by employing them in labour in the streets and highways, with chains and badges, as impolitic and useless, and operating less as a punishment to themselves, or a terror to others, than to beget a greater insensibility to virtue or to shame. He maintained that absolute seclusion, in all countries where the experiment had been tried, generally and in a short time, broke the most hardened dispositions, and most inflexible tempers; and that nothing could be

more effectual than the establishment of penitentiaries, where criminals might be separately immured, and secluded from the view and intercourse of the world. The people, moreover, were offended by the exposure; and criminals enjoyed opportunities of communicating with their free comrades, and of concerting means of escape.

The old articles of confederation, which had conducted the nation in safety through the war, were found too weak to bind together the states, when released from the pressure of an external foe. The American people, as a necessary consequence, were neither prosperous at home, nor respectable abroad. The enemies of our republican system had already begun to predict its downfall, and its friends, to apprehend it. When, in this uncertain and unpromising state of things, it was determined to call a convention to form a more efficient constitution for the general government, Mr. Clymer, while yet a member of the legislature, was sent as a deputy to that body. In the deliberations of that illustrious assembly, he evinced the most enlightened and liberal views, and united in recommending the instrument which had been framed, to the people of the United States.

When this constitution was adopted by the requisite number of states, and was about to be carried

into execution, he was elected a member of the first house of representatives by a large majority of the people of Pennsylvania. His election took place in the month of November, 1788, at a meeting of the conferees appointed by the different counties of the state, and held at Lancaster. The deputies from Philadelphia were elected by a large town meeting, which directed them to place the name of Mr. Clymer upon the general ticket. On the eighth of April, 1789, the oath required by the new constitution was administered to him by the chief justice of New York, and he again united his talents with those of the assembled sages of the general legislature. He pursued, with an undeviating step, the same principles that had uniformly marked his former progress, and gave an unqualified support to all those measures which so largely contributed to the honour and welfare of the nation, and conferred so much distinction upon what is termed the Washington administration.

The rigid republicanism of Mr. Clymer rendered him averse from all titular distinctions; hence he opposed the addition of any title either to the president or vice president. After adverting to the high and lofty titles assumed by the most impotent potentates, and proving by experience that so far from conferring power, they frequently made their pos-

sessors ridiculous, he proceeded to reprove this growing predilection of his countrymen. Titular distinctions, said he, are said to be unpopular in the United States, yet a person would be led to think otherwise, from the vast number of honourable gentlemen we have in America. As soon as a man is selected for the public service, his fellow citizens, with liberal hand, shower down titles on him,—either excellency or honourable. He would venture to affirm there were more honourable esquires in the United States, than all the world beside. He wished to check a propensity so notoriously evidenced in favour of distinctions, and hoped the example of the house might prevail, to extinguish the predilection that appeared in favour of titles.

It was a saying of Mr. Clymer's, that "a representative of the people is appointed to think *for* and not *with* his constituents," and in conformity with this anti-parasitical doctrine, he invariably, during the whole course of his political career, showed a total disregard to the opinions of his constituents when opposed to the matured decisions of his own mind. His ideas upon this subject closely coincided with those of the immortal Burke, and he might, with him, have addressed this language to his constituents, without uttering a sentiment or urging an argument, which he did not feel: "certainly, gen-

tlemen, it ought to be the happiness and glory of a representative, to live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence, and the most unreserved communication, with his constituents. Their wishes ought to have great weight with him; their opinion, high respect; their business, unremitted attention. It is his duty to sacrifice his repose, his pleasures, his satisfactions, to theirs; and, above all, ever, and in all cases, to prefer their interest to his own. But his unbiassed opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you; to any man, or to any set of men living. These he does not derive from your pleasure; no, nor from the law nor the constitution. They are a trust from Providence, for the abuse of which he is deeply answerable. Your representative owes you not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving, you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion." "Government and legislation are matters of reason and judgment, and not of inclination; and what sort of reason is that, in which the determination precedes the discussion; in which one set of men deliberate, and another decide; and where those who form the conclusion are perhaps three hundred miles distant from those who hear the argument? To deliver an opinion is the right of all men; that of constituents is a weighty and respec-

table opinion, which a representative ought always to rejoice to hear, and which he ought always most seriously to consider. But *authoritative* instructions; *mandates* issued, which the member is bound blindly and implicitly to obey, to vote, and to argue for, though contrary to the clearest conviction of his judgment and conscience; these are things utterly unknown to the laws of this land, and which arise from a fundamental mistake of the whole order and tenor of our constitution."—Possessing these principles in their fullest extent, and stung with the idea of being mentally subservient to any class of men whatever, Mr. Clymer warmly opposed the proposition introducing a clause in the constitution, which conferred upon the people the unalienable right of instructing their representatives. It is remarkable that a system so servile, so fraught with danger, and so obviously adverse to all the purposes of legislation, should have found supporters on the floor of congress. No one felt more indignant at the dependence which it would necessarily create, than Mr. Clymer. The language of his objections was at once nervous and conclusive. Do gentlemen, said he, foresee the extent of these words? If they have a constitutional right to instruct us, it infers that we are bound by those instructions, and as we ought not to decide constitutional questions

by implication, I presume that we shall be called upon to go further, and expressly declare the members of the legislature to be bound by the instructions of their constituents. This is a most dangerous principle, utterly destructive of all ideas of an independent and deliberative body, which are essential requisites in the legislatures of free governments: they prevent men of abilities and experience from rendering those services to the community that are in their power, destroying the object contemplated by establishing an efficient general government, and rendering congress a mere passive machine.

When the naturalization bill came under the consideration of congress, a long discussion ensued relative to the facilities which ought to be afforded to aliens, both as to holding property, and becoming citizens of the country. The existing abuses in regard to their stolen privileges, and the illegality of the votes taken at elections, demanded a speedy remedy. In the debate upon this subject, Mr. Clymer was of opinion that foreigners ought to be gradually admitted to the rights of citizens, and that a residence for a certain time should entitle them to hold property; but that the higher privileges of citizens, such as electing, or being elected into office, should require a longer term. Permitting these

rights to be assumed, and exercised at a shorter period, would not operate as any inducement to persons to emigrate, as the great object of emigration is generally that of procuring a more comfortable subsistence, or to better the circumstances of the individuals. He thought the exercises of particular privileges was but a secondary consideration.—But the opinions of Mr. Clymer are more fully developed in the following extract from his manuscript memoranda: "Aliens might, with no less advantage than native citizens, be vested with every right of property; but none of the political rights should be entrusted to them, until after a long probation: and this would not be in any way unjust; for a stranger comes into a new country to be relieved from the oppressions of the old, or to better his personal condition, and not to govern it. In the countries from which strangers generally come to us, it is the part of the people to obey;—a simple lesson, easily learned: but in our country it is their part to govern, which requires a long preparation of habits and of knowledge; and it is a part which strangers are unfit to act. He comes either with a disposition already broken to some degree of slavery, or with a superstitious reverence for the despotism to which custom has reconciled him; and wishes to assimilate the powers of his new to his

old government. Or, from a hatred of the old, from its oppressions which he has felt, he becomes, from a want of discriminating knowledge, an enemy to all governments whatsoever, and is, of course, the factious and turbulent partisan of anarchy and disorder."

He supported the assumption of the state debts as a measure which, while it ought to be acted upon with caution, was necessary for the preservation of the union. He observed that the unauthorized debts assumed would be sufficiently covered in the gross demand which the states would have against the United States, when their accounts should be finally made up. It was objected that it would be difficult to find the means of satisfying both the federal and state debts consolidated; to this he replied, that congress could not assume the state debts without assuming, at the same time, those very means which otherwise the states would employ in extinguishing their debts, were they left on their own hands; and that, in this case, it would be as easy to satisfy both species of debt as one. The too great dependence of the states upon the United States, which would ensue from a transfer of the power of providing for their own debts, was also stated as an objection to the measure. Mr. Clymer answered, that if a condition of absolute de-

pendency on the general government was to follow this measure, it would only be the anticipation of a necessary event; for, on the final settlement of accounts, whatever debts were then due to the states must be assumed, and in like manner provided for by congress, in taking the taxation out of the hands of the states.

In the debate touching that portion of the tonnage bill which proposed a discrimination between foreign nations, Mr. Clymer appealed to the public acts of America for the sentiments of the people respecting it, from which it appeared that Great Britain was regarded in commerce as a foreign nation; but it was the wish of all to increase the commerce between France and the United States. In common with his colleagues he strongly relied upon public opinion, and the sentiments which had been unequivocally expressed throughout the union, which were against placing foreign nations generally on a level with the allies of the country. He thought it important to prove to those nations who had declined forming commercial treaties with them, that the United States possessed and would exercise the power of retaliating any regulations unfavourable to their trade, and insisted strongly on the advantages of America in a war of commercial regulation, should this measure produce one.

The claims of France on the gratitude of the American people were urged in favour of the principle for which he contended. It was also maintained that the commerce between the United States and Great Britain had exceeded its natural boundary. "The little trade," said he, "carried on between France and America is favourable to us; that to Great Britain, the contrary. We receive money for what we carry to France, with which our mercantile operations are increased; we are not paid with rum, as in our British West India trade. This is a fact of notoriety; it has become a subject of complaint in that country, that we take no return in manufactures from her as we do from a neighbouring nation. These advantages, therefore, backed by the voice of the people, warrant a preference of the nature of that which is now intended."

At the expiration of the first congressional term of two years, he declined a re-election, which closed his long, laborious, and able, legislative career. But he was not permitted to remain in the shade of private life. President Washington had long known his worth and respected his virtues, and now destined him to fill one of the most arduous situations in the state.

In 1791, a bill was introduced in congress, conforming to the report of the secretary of the trea-

sury, imposing a duty on spirits distilled within the United States, which, notwithstanding the vehement opposition of the southern and western members, was carried by a considerable majority. A large portion of the population, especially that which had spread itself over the extensive regions of the west, consuming imported articles to a very inconsiderable amount, was not much affected by the imposts on foreign merchandize. But the present duty, reaching this part of society, it was consequently indisposed to the tax. The opponents of the bill contended that other sources of revenue, less exceptionable and odious, might be explored. The duty was branded with the hateful epithet of an excise, a species of taxation, it was said, so peculiarly oppressive as to be abhorred even in England; and which was totally incompatible with the spirit of liberty. The facility with which it might be extended to other objects, was urged against its admission into the American system, as well as the great hostility manifested against it in some of the states, which might endanger the lives of the revenue officers, from the fury of the people.*

The arguments of those who supported this salutary law having prevailed, it was necessary to confide its execution to men, who would discharge

* Marshal's Life Washington, vol. v, chapt. v, p. 288.

their duties with moderation but firmness. Mr. Clymer was placed at the head of the excise department in the state of Pennsylvania. The odium which the act, and the officers who executed it, encountered, and the insurrection it occasioned are matters of history. The discontents in other parts of the union had been dissipated by the prudence and firmness of the government, and the law had been carried into general operation; but in the district of Pennsylvania lying west of the Alleghany mountains, the resistance wore the appearance of system, and was regularly progressive. Violence and outrage accompanied the opposition of the malcontents. It was the duty of Mr. Clymer, as supervisor, to appoint collectors in each county, but for a considerable time every person was deterred from consenting to permit an office to be held at his house. When this difficulty was supposed to have been overcome, those who had been prevailed on to accede to the propositions of the supervisor, were compelled by threats and personal violence, to retract their consent.

To subdue the opposition which continued to gather fresh force, and to burst out into the most lawless acts, it was prudently determined to resort in the first place to the arm of the law. To prove its strength, Mr. Clymer was sent into the very

theatre of insurrection, for the purpose of collecting evidence against the principal actors. He proceeded to the spot, at the risk of his life, and it appears to have been considered by government as an extremely hazardous enterprise. He was directed to proceed under a feigned name as far as Bedford, from which place he was escorted to Pittsburgh by a troop of horse, detached for that purpose, from the army of general Wayne. His exertions were unremitting, and he did every thing which his instructions would permit; but it is be- insidiously contrived by the

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ERRATUM.

Page 217, *line* 13.—These instructions, erroneously ascribed to the Secretary of State, emanated from the then Attorney General.

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The duties of this office being disagreeable to him, he was induced to resign it, after having firmly borne a full share of the odium which, in the minds of little men and of the malcontents, was attached to it. An instance of this general impression occurred soon after his return from the performance of his duties as supervisor, in the publication of a sarcastic piece relative to his travelling in a feigned character to Bedford. Mr. Clymer, who never patiently submitted to any indignity, went to the office of the printer, and bestowed upon him a severe and well-merited chastisement with his cane. His notions of ndependence and right were not

abstractedly confined to national affairs, and he always demanded towards himself that politeness and respect which he was ever careful to show to others.

The resignation of his office in the excise did not, as he intended, release Mr. Clymer from public duty. In the year 1796, he was appointed, together with colonel Hawkins and colonel Pickins, to negociate a treaty with the Cherokee and Creek Indians in Georgia, which was satisfactorily effected in the month of June. The authorities of Georgia wished to dispossess the Indians without recompense, but the general government interfered, and appointed commissioners to treat with them. In the month of April, Mr. Clymer departed from Philadelphia for Savannah, in a vessel not only unfit, but unsafe, to perform the voyage. The consequence of this ill-advised economy on the part of the governmental agent, was the extreme danger of the lives on board. After a stormy passage, a harbour was made in Charleston, to the great relief of the crew, who had been kept incessantly labouring at the pumps. He arrived, with Mrs. Clymer, on the twenty-ninth of April; they were soon abundantly compensated for the maritime dangers and privations which they endured, by the warm-hearted hospitality which characterises the city of Charles-

ton. "This town," he remarks in one of his letters, "impresses me very agreeably. People of fortune live in excellent, airy, houses, with abundance of ground about them; without the appearance of form and ceremony, but with great hospitality. A northern tour, to them, can be only to avoid the greater heat of the climate; the leaving home in other respects must be a sacrifice." In another letter he observes, "The hospitality of South Carolina, not in the least oppressive, is real and unaffected; and your reception, every where, is such as sets you immediately at ease."

On the eleventh of April, Mr. Clymer arrived at Savannah, and on the next day proceeded to St. Mary's. The day fixed upon to meet the other commissioners being the first of June, he did not immediately continue his journey to the appointed spot. But during this interval he was not idle, as his journal amply attests: it contains a vast variety of information upon almost every topic, but particularly agriculture. The following extract affords an example of the minuteness with which he sought after knowledge, and the constitutional desire for mental improvement which he possessed. "This country appears to be but bad; the soil sand, with a bottom in some places of tough clay; the produce, tall pines and scrubby palmets, with here and there

a hammock, (as it is called,) of live oaks, &c. It will, however, yield, by dint of heat, a good deal, and with variety almost infinite. Take an example: M. de Borel, a Saint Domingo fugitive, settled here with sixty or seventy negroes on five hundred acres, and has planted one hundred and sixty; here are to be found, cotton, Indian corn, beans, peas, potatoes red and white, rice, indigo, all the vegetables, orange trees, limes, lemons, pomegranates, nectarines, mulberries, peaches, a great variety of the grapes of France, succeeding perfectly well, &c. &c. I believe, indeed, the soil will leave the tiller behind-hand after a year or two, unless recruited with cow-penning, which you every where hear spoken of;—the great range admitting of large herds of cattle. But a country cannot have many people in it, and large cattle ranges too. Wheat and rye are in this part of Georgia. Hogs might be raised in abundance, but for wolves and panthers. Mr. Seagrove put forty-five sows at Point Peter last year, a small projection of land, a few miles from hence; but they, and all their progeny, one excepted, fell in a short time a prey to these devourers."

At length, after a long and tedious council, the treaty with the Indians was concluded on the twenty-ninth of June. "Our treaty," he writes, "fin-

ished yesterday at noon, and the last signing is just published by our cannon. I am sure it is an honest treaty, for it was negociated without artifice or threats;—it is honest because it will greatly benefit each of the contracting parties;—it is honest because it is protested against by the Georgia commissioners, who found all the customary avenues to the Indian lands barred by the principles we had laid down in conducting it.—In signing this treaty, I have contended against the low-lived practice of rendering the names of the chiefs as known among the traders and interpreters, which never fails to disgrace and degrade all the solemn transactions with these people;—so that you will have neither English Jack nor the Mad Hog, but such names as Opìo-mèco, Tustinèca-thlòcco, and others equally soft, sonorous, and significant, like that of Don Quixote's horse."

With regard to the out-post where the treaty was concluded, he observes, " The spot where we are is enlivened from its being the scene of negociation, but we shall soon leave it to its natural gloominess. Imagine five or six men, well entitled, from their good temper and deportment, to be called gentlemen, shut up in the midst of melancholy pines, wasting their existence on a desert air; their weariness seldom relieved but by the beats

of the drum, and the puerile round of garrison duty. No doubt most of them wish they had not set so high a value on honour, as to seek it in a military life. They seem to feel their misery. As to the soldiers, they have relaxation enough in leap-frog, driving the bull to market, trap-ball," &c.

The Indian character continues to be so unjustly villified and abused, that no apology is necessary for introducing an example tending to soften its features, together with the remarks of Mr. Clymer, predicated upon his personal observations, and upon the information which he collected: " The strongest passions of the Indians are revenge and benevolence. Revenge in them must be distinguished from the same spirit among the whites: having no government, or at least, no public institutions to avenge a wrong, revenge is nearly with them as justice is with us;—not so much proceeding from a heart retaining resentment, as from a sense of duty. Their general disposition and habits, are those of kindness. This has just been evidenced. When the young warriors who tracked and brought back two deserters to Colerain, were told what might be the punishment for desertion, they were extremely unhappy, and begged they might be pardoned;—and it was their intercession chiefly which moved the commissioners in favour of the deserters."

At length Mr. and Mrs. Clymer embarked at St. Mary's on the twentieth of July, and after a disagreeable passage, arrived at Norfolk on the thirty-first of the same month. Thus terminated the political life of Mr. Clymer, which endured, with short intervals, for more than twenty years. He had now leisure to reflect upon the chequered scenes through which he had passed, and to enjoy the soothing conviction that no act of his long life had cast the slightest blemish upon his public or private reputation.

——————————Servetur ad imum
Qualis ab incæpto processerit, et sibi constet.

He was subsequently elected the first president of the Philadelphia Bank, and of the Academy of Fine Arts, on the establishment of those institutions; and vice president of the Philadelphia Agricultural Society upon its re-organization in 1805: all these offices he continued to hold until his decease.

Mr. Clymer possessed strong intellects from nature, which he improved by culture and study. "Firm, but not obstinate; independent, but not arrogant; communicative, but not obtrusive; he was at once the amiable and instructive companion. Retired, studious, contemplative, he was ever adding something to his knowledge, and endeavouring to make that knowledge useful. His predominant pas-

sion was to promote every scheme for the improvement of his country, whether in science, agriculture, polite education, the useful or the fine arts. It was in the social circle of friendship that his acquirements were displayed and appreciated, and although their action was communicated from this circle to a wider sphere, it was with an enfeebled force." Diffident and retired, while capable of teaching, he seemed only anxious to learn. He sought in vain to conceal from the world the extraordinary talents which he possessed, or to shrink from the honourable consideration in which they were held. He never solicited preferment, and would have remained in the private walks of life, had not a sense of duty, and the voice of his country, called him into public usefulness. He never sought popularity, and the large portion of it which he enjoyed, arose solely from a conviction on the part of the people, that he would diligently and faithfully discharge his duty.

He possessed a mind perseveringly directed towards the promotion of useful objects;—an uncommon zeal in the service of individuals and of public institutions;—a delicacy and disinterestedness of which there are few examples;—a profound love of rational liberty and hatred of tyranny;—a happy serenity and cheerfulness of mind;—a vigour and

originality of thought;—moderation of sentiment and purity of heart. The kindness and urbanity of his manners endeared him to all his associates, while the simplicity which was a marked feature of his character, did not permit him to assume an offensive or unreasonable control over their opinions. His conversation was of the most instructive kind, and manifested an extensive knowledge of books and men. He possessed the rare quality of never traducing or speaking ill of the absent, or endeavouring to debase their characters. His benevolence of disposition and liberality of sentiment, were always conspicuous; and these ennobling sentiments were evidenced in a distinguished manner, by his having been the principal promoter of the amelioration of the state penal code.

He was scrupulous and punctual in his attention to what may be termed the minor or secondary duties of life, or to those engagements which, being merely voluntary, are so often considered as of no moral or binding force. In the public bodies over which he presided, he knew that his presence and services were relied on for their operations and usefulness; he felt the responsibility of the stations, and that it was through his instrumentality alone that their proceedings could be properly conducted; and he never permitted any idle humour, or party

of pleasure, to allure him from the post of duty. In all the engagements, however trivial, of private life, he observed the same punctilious system. "He who justly estimates the value of a punctual performance of a promise, will not, without very good reason, disregard it, whether it be to sign a contract or walk with a friend; to pay a debt, or present a toy to a child." In this most useful virtue, Mr. Clymer was pre-eminent.

His pretensions to eloquence were limited, and he seldom appeared as a public speaker; but when his diffidence was conquered by feelings of duty, and he did speak, he was listened to with universal attention, because his speeches were short, and always to the purpose. A more general regard to this habit would not be useless at the present day: ad captandum orators would less frequently heat and irritate the public mind, and the business of large bodies would be conducted with less bustle and more celerity. His style of epistolary writing, in which he extensively engaged, was playful and easy, and, when occasions required it, forcible and convincing. He was critical in his phraseology, and somewhat formal in the construction of his sentences. In his moments of leisure, he frequently amused himself by composing pieces of light poetry, some of which bear the marks of considerable

talent and humour. A few days before he expired, he dictated a piece of this nature, relative to the British and their navy.

His characteristic brevity and depth of reasoning, are apparent in the aphorisms, laconic sayings, and pungent remarks, contained in the writings which he has left, a portion of which are worthy of extraction:

To go to Canton is not to satisfy curiosity: it is looking at the outside of a show-box.

Mere swearing in conversation is nothing but powder without ball.

A habit must be a practice; but a practice may not be a habit.

The bow loses its spring, that is always bent; and the mind will never do much, unless it sometimes does nothing.

Some men's minds are like looking-glasses; for having no images or impressions of their own, they can but reflect those of other people.

It is a hard condition of society where a man's duties seem to lie one way, and his reason another.

Some people may be compared to sieves, so fully does every thing they hear pass through them; but, unlike common sieves, they sift larger instead of smaller.

To make a lawyer, a subtile understanding is required: to make a legislator, a great mind.

The artificial reasoning of the law is our natural reason, read backward like a witches' prayer: this reasoning is much boasted of by Coke and other lawyers, and is said to be the perfection of man's reason.

A printer publishes a lie, for which he ought to stand in the pillory. The people believe in the lie and act upon it; and "the voice of the people is the voice of God;"—and so the saying ends in a blasphemy. It is less difficult to impose upon a whole million than upon one of the million: you can attempt the one only by something like sense; but the million are always to be moved by sound.

An enterprising merchant is like a bottle filled with a fermentable liquid;—neither giving signs of weakness until the moment it bursts outright.

The sudden admiration of over-rated excellence, like yeast, rises but to fall again.

A judge should be as learned in the laws as if he had had no other study; and his mind should be as unfettered by the laws as if he were a perfect stranger to them.

Old clothes have so far the advantage of old wit, that they may be used at second hand.

Civility always requires to see you; hopes you are well; makes kind inquiries; and perpetually offers its little services.

Politeness is more ceremonious; has a constant respect for your opinions; contradicts with the utmost deference; and gives place to you upon all occasions.

Good breeding is ever guarded in its address, and discreetly keeps free from subjects that might be in the slightest degree unwelcome.

The civil man may be of gross manners, without either politeness or good-breeding. The polite man may not fall upon any of the common topics of civility, and may stumble upon things which good-breeding avoids. The well-bred man is of a higher order: the former two are made by disposition;—he, by sense; he must be polite, but may not run too much upon civilities.

Monarchy is a high tower set upon a sunken plain: in a republic, there may be no tower, but the general level is higher.

Money and water may be compared together in the circumstance of their expenditure;—both running off, the one in the proportion of its heap, or quantity, and the other, according to its height or head: with this frequent difference, however, that the running of the water regularly diminishes as

the head subsides, whereas the running of the money does not decrease with the sinking of the stock from which it is taken, but may go on rather with an accelerated velocity, until the whole is gone. Hence it is that overgrown fortunes often come to an end sooner than moderate ones; and hence the folly, and improvidence, as it may be called, of great acquisitions for children.

Possessing the sensibility and delicacy which are essential to taste, Mr. Clymer had of course a peculiar fondness for the fine arts, elegant literature, and the refined pursuits of a cultivated genius. Music and painting appear to have particularly invited his attention, and exercised his judgment. The importance which he attached to the encouragement of the fine arts in general, led him, in the year 1805, to co-operate zealously in the foundation of the academy which now subsists. At that period the idea of such an establishment had never presented itself to the imaginations of our citizens, and many were at a loss to conjecture its object and uses. Notwithstanding the liberality of public patronage, the practicability of the scheme was denied by some, and doubted by many. But the popularity and high-standing of those who embarked as leaders in the undertaking, attracted a just and merited confidence; and the institution was es-

tablished. To secure the extension and continuance of this patronage, it was necessary to place at the head of it, a man on whose judgment the public might properly hang their faith, and on whose recommendation, they might prudently afford their support. With such impressions and views, Mr. Clymer at once presented himself to the founders of the academy as a person eminently qualified and entitled to be placed at its head. The experiment justified the choice, and he continued in that situation till the time of his death.

Justly considering agriculture as the most useful and independent of all human pursuits, he availed himself of every opportunity to acquire a knowledge of its theory and practice. Although not a practical agriculturist, his conviction of the all-essential uses and general importance of such associations, induced and stimulated his successful exertions, as the main instrument in establishing the Philadelphia Agricultural Society, in 1785, of which he was, for many years the vice-president, and held that station until the period of his decease. He assisted, with a zeal patriotic and intelligent, in promoting the knowledge and interests of agriculture, and afforded one among many other proofs, that practical husbandry depends for its improvement and prosperity, more on science and the ac-

quirements of well-educated and public spirited men, who devote a portion of their means, time, and talents, to the principles of it, than on the limited experience, and uninstructed examples of merely practical husbandmen. Whilst the miseries and dangers of war, create a necessity for characters distinguished in the arts and works of destruction, and portraits of heroes are exhibited as remembrances of achievements, attractive, because they are dazzling and brilliant, it is as meritoriously exemplary, and as highly obligatory to commemorate retiring, yet conspicuous, worth and talents, employed in the equally honourable, and far more desirable and salutary, ARTS OF PEACE.*

In relation to the progress of agriculture in this country, he makes the following remarks in a letter dated the twenty-eighth of June, 1809: "Concerning agricultural improvements, I am perhaps single in my opinion. It is that American improvements will be faster and more universal than those of any other country; and the notion is founded upon the one fact, that the workers of the soil are almost universally the same with the proprietors. Proprietors, as they have a greater interest in improvements, have not only the greater spirit, but the better capacity for them, than the tenants, who almost

* Memoirs Philad. Agricultural Society, vol. 3, p. lxxv.

every where throughout Europe, are the cultivators; and our country will possess this advantage, so long as the laws of descents continue as they are. The effect of such laws upon the good of society, is more than that of any particular form of government."

His researches were various, and if not always profound, they were competent to his purposes, and beyond his pretensions. Science, literature, and the arts, had all a share of his attention, and it was only by a frequent intercourse with him, that the extent of his knowledge of each, could be discovered. His private letters are filled with plans of machinery, agricultural implements, water works, canals, bridges, &c. &c. as well as valuable recipes, affecting almost every branch of the arts. It was his custom, when conversing with a mechanic, to inquire minutely into the nature of his trade, and its operations: by pursuing this plan, he accumulated a large stock of knowledge relative to the common occupations of mechanics.

A few desultory extracts from the manuscripts of Mr. Clymer will serve to illustrate his character and feelings, as well as the comprehensiveness of his genius, which embraced almost every topic within the scope of the human mind.

In treating of the national debt of Great Britain, he observes, "Mr. Hume and others long ago predicted that if the debt of England should ever swell to a certain size, the nation would necessarily break. But the debt having swelled to above ten times the size, and predictions not being verified, so great is the confidence now become, that a bankruptcy, under any circumstance of debt, is thought impossible. The skin of a man, indeed, will stretch indefinitely, so as to wrap up any growth of morbid flesh or fat; but whether the skin of a nation is endowed with this striking faculty, is yet to be known. Hume failed from not contemplating, at the same time, a growth of the national faculties correspondent to the supposed increase of her burthen; and the present question should be, can these faculties be stretched further than they now are?"

He strongly deprecated all monopolising systems; "Our feelings," he says, "are more strongly excited against a conquering, than a monopolising, nation. Conquest has to plead ambition or glory, with which the world has always been fascinated; but monopoly has not the excuse of any human passion except avarice, the most ignoble of all. The effects of the monopolising, is also more felt than that of the conquering, spirit. A country conquered becomes the care of the conqueror; it is seldom more

than a change of one bad government for another, in which the people neither lose nor gain. Monopoly makes no conquest, but acts upon a whole people, in repressing all private industry and enterprise. The one makes war upon a nation collectively; the other makes war upon the people individually."

The humour with which he ridicules the claim of sovereignty over the sea by Great Britain, is well adapted to the subject: "England says she has conquered the sea; and hence her right over it; and the plea has been foolishly admitted by some amongst us. But the prior right is in Venice, who long since was married to the sea; and by a ring, according to the canons. England may pretend a marriage too, but then it is by a fleet, and as forced, and during the subsistence of the former matrimony, is, according to Blackstone, void or voidable. England is not aware that in founding right upon conquest, she gives the right to Bonaparte, who, in the conquest of Venice, succeeds in the law, to every of her rights, titles, claims, and interests."

"In comparing republics with monarchies," he remarks, "we may suppose a greater consistence and steadiness of conduct in the government of the former than of the latter; and for this reason, that the administration in a republic being appointed and

renewed by the people, must more closely pursue the course of policy and measures best agreeing with the peculiar national character and genius, which are always the same;—whereas, in a monarchy, the sovereign with any fixed character, is left at liberty in this respect, and he may or may not pursue the national bent. Hence, under every administration, the incessant warfare of the Romans, which was produced by a steady national passion for conquest and aggrandizement. Is not a republic, if its disposition be warlike, a more dangerous neighbour, on this account, than a monarchy. In a republic, the administration is true to the general passions, and always represent them: a king is true to his own."

Towards the principles of Pitt, and the policy pursued by him, he was resolutely opposed: an epitaph upon that minister, found among Mr. Clymer's papers, sums up in bitter terms all his political misdeeds, and portrays his character in just, and vivid colours. The failure of the anticipations of Mr. Pitt, in regard to France, is humorously adverted to by Mr. Clymer: " An almanack-maker was in the yearly custom of predicting the death of Henry IV; and Mr. Pitt has gone on, session after session, in asserting the French to be just upon the point of giving out. The king said of the almanack-

maker, this fellow, if he persists, will certainly be right at last: we may possibly say the same of Mr. Pitt. His only mistake, perhaps, was in fixing upon a time, and in the certainty he seemed to be in, that he would be able to hold out longer than the French. He has seen his error at last, and now speaks exactly the language of Nell Gwyn, when she found herself for the first time in her own coach, *Who would have thought it!*"

We find, from the following letter addressed to Mr. Law, that the patriotic spirit which enlightened his more youthful days, had not lost any of its fires at the age of seventy.

September, 1810.

Dear Sir,

The freedom your English friend has taken with us, in his letter to you, will excuse the freedom of the observations I am going to make.

He seems to think that we, Americans, are but imperfectly civilized. If by great advancement in poetry, painting, or music; in speculative or demonstrative science, or the arts, he means civilization, he may be right; for in these things we are not perfect. But by civilization, I understand, chiefly, that social temper, those common principles, which act most beneficially upon mankind:

and I will give you my notion of the degree in which, under that temper and those principles, we are civilized, negatively;—that is, by what *we do not*, not by what *we do*.

We do not, then, as is said of the mouse with a large litter, starve nine of our children to over feed the tenth.

We do not impress one man for a guinea, or hang another for a shilling.

We do not interdict to any portion of our people, the honourable or lucrative trusts of our country, because these people do not eat their bread, or drink their wine, at the Lord's Supper, according to a certain formula.

It is not our policy to keep down the wages of the labourer, below the means of his subsistence, that he may become the more dependant for it on our bounty.

Our laws are not so framed as that the poorer people are necessarily confined to the same district, as deer to the same park.

We do not find it necessary to keep up the spirit and hardihood of our people, by the public spectacle of executions, whippings, pugilism, or bull-baiting.

We have no official secret how to keep a coach out of a salary that would hardly find the incumbent in his coat.

In journeying from Dan to Bersheba, we are not called upon at every step, to discharge the perquisites of hosts of leeches and locusts.

I might go on with the enumeration, but perhaps there is already enough of it, for a comparison, to any one inclined to make it, betwixt our country, and that of your friend.

G. C.

Mr. Clymer elsewhere prosecutes this subject: "A false notion," he writes, "has got abroad that congress once voted us the most enlightened people on earth, which has given birth, among foreign writers, to abundance of ridicule; but," continues the veteran champion of our rights, "arrogant as any such pretension would seem to them, it is not incapable of some defence. What is the highest state of civilization? Is it indicated by a superiority in literature, by greater excellence in portrait-painting, music, or oratory, or knowledge of the sciences? Is it not rather by the best practice upon the principles most promotive of the good of mankind, by a better adaptation of the laws and institutions of society to its true interests, and by such

tokens as show the improvement of the social character?—If this be true, we may compare in civilization with any of the great nations; and perhaps, with much advantage."

At the commencement of the French revolution, he was its warm friend and admirer, because he believed that it afforded the prospect of emancipating a great people from political bondage. He sympathised with them in their cause, because he fondly anticipated that they were about to imitate the example of his own country. He was interested in their incipient exertions, because his heart was capacious, and embraced the whole human race. But when he discovered that, instead of honestly and soberly prosecuting the great work of regeneration, they were exciting disturbances abroad and committing atrocities at home, he abandoned the French nation as totally unprepared for the enjoyment of rational liberty. He pitied the levity of that unhappy people, and justly attributed their abasement to the miserable government under which their minds, and those of their progenitors, had been formed. But a strong bias ever influenced his mind in favour of the people who had aided us in our revolutionary struggle; and this predilection is apparent in many of his writings. From among the various observations touching the

French revolution, the following have been selected as explanatory of his sentiments in regard to it:

"Burke and other English writers, who have said so much against the French revolution, particularly fix upon the doctrine of equality, confounding that of condition, with that of rights. The former figures to you the universal levelling of property, which must forbid every one to retain or acquire more than his proper share; involving in it the discouragement or inutility of all the arts, and a return to the savage state. This representation is easily perceived to be false. As to the other,—an original equality of rights,—who does not admit the justness of the principle in the abstract? And these writers, in the blindness of their rage, do not see that it is the basis of English liberty, with but a very small exception; for, in all the millions composing the population of Great Britain, there are but a few hundred who have any birth-right pre-eminence over their fellow-men; and this partial distinction is not made for the sake of the abstract principle, but from some fancied or real convenience in government. A king and his family, and the peers who are senators, are all who have their hereditary or created superiority; the rest are commoners, and are treated as such in their life and in their death. Now in France, with the exception

of a king, no governmental use was ever pretended for any privileged order."

"The early interference of England in the French revolution, has been the real source of the evils which, for the last sixteen years, have so much afflicted mankind; for it has, in its consequences, given all the powers of the land to France, and of the seas, to herself. Those who support England in this fatal policy, have pleaded the necessity of war, as the proper antidote to the French revolutionary principles; but where was the necessity of war to keep out principles that would have kept out themselves, from the odium which the bulk of the English people had been taught to attach to them. Every hundredth man, perhaps, might have been infected with them, but that man, it was found, could be easily restrained by proclamation or persecution. No further proof is wanting of the deceitfulness of this pretence, than the ministerial boast, at all times, that their war was highly popular.—If this was the artificial, what was the natural ground of the war?—nothing more than that of any former one, the national hatred always entertained against France, and the occasion so favourable, as it was considered, of reducing the power of an ancient rival. But at the time when the measure of war was first conceived by England, and a thou-

sand circumstances indicated it long before the declaration, if we distinguish between the conduct of the revolution and its fundamental principles, were those principles bad? We are bound, in fact, to consider them as much better than those of the English, as they came nearer to the republican forms, and with promises more favourable to liberty. And, was there then any other excitement to war than those mentioned, it was that if France were suffered to sit quietly down under those forms, they would in time so recommend themselves, as to be models for the rest of Europe; and hence might be the fear for English monarchy and aristocracy."

Of the more extended and laboured essays of Mr. Clymer we can only speak in general terms, as abounding in forcible argument, judicious reasoning, and nervous language. His exculpation of the political character of doctor Franklin,—his remarks on the French revolution,—his addresses to the members of the Academy of Fine Arts,—and his various agricultural, political, literary, and scientific essays,—all portray the extent of his knowledge, and the soundness of his understanding.

Mr. Clymer was a man of irreproachable morals, and a pure heart. Possessed of all the gene-

rous and social virtues, his benevolence was extensive but discriminating. In the family circle, and in friendly intercourse, he appeared to peculiar advantage, when the ardour of his affections, and his warmth of feeling, were not restrained by the diffidence which avoided their public display. His sensibility was most acute: the death of his eldest son, about the beginning of the revolution, for a long time embittered his existence, and the loss of another, during the expedition against the insurgents in the western parts of Pennsylvania, occasioned a shock so lasting and severe, that his appointment on the mission to Georgia is supposed to have been conferred by the executive, with the view of dissipating his sorrow.

With a purity of morals upon which calumny itself had never sought to cast a blemish, he possessed a singular idea of the bonds which generally confine mankind within the bounds of morality. He believed that it was more a sense of honour, than the moral sense, which guarded against the commission of bad actions, because, under circumstances where actions intrinsically bad may be committed without impeachment of honour, or according to custom or public sanction, they are very readily adopted. He advances two examples in support of this opinion:

1. A merchant in Philadelphia draws upon a correspondent abroad, who is indebted to him; the correspondent becomes a bankrupt, and the bill is protested. To the original misfortune of losing the debt, a secondary one is added of large damages to the purchaser of the bill, who never conceives that, in exacting them of the drawer, he violates every principle of humanity and natural equity.

2. Two merchants of different nations, are in the habits of friendly and useful intercourse, and at all times ready to assist each other's credit to the utmost. Let but a war be declared between their respective sovereigns, and they privateer upon each other's property with as little feeling as if they had been personal enemies.

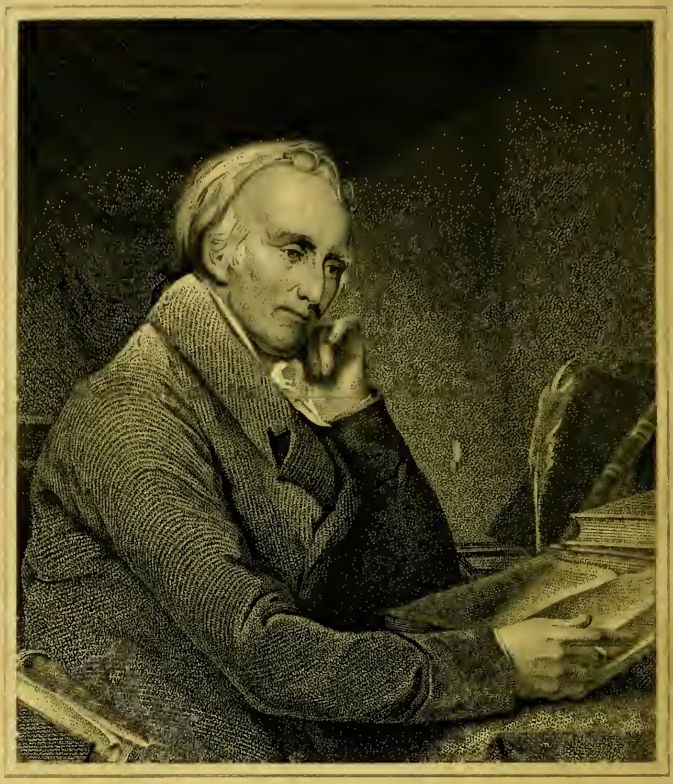
Mr. Clymer was of the middle size, erect in his person, of a fair complexion, and a pleasing countenance. His features were strongly marked with intelligence and benevolence. He died on the twenty-third of January, 1813, in the seventy-fourth year of his age, at the residence of his son, at Morrisville, Berks county, Pennsylvania.

He was, indeed, an invaluable member of society, whose loss was keenly felt, and whose memory will be long cherished. To use the eloquent language of Mr. Hopkinson,—at different periods of our national history, from the first bold step which was

taken in the march of independence, to its full and perfect consummation in the establishment of a wise and effective system of government, whenever the virtue and talents of our country were put in requisition, Mr. Clymer was found with the selected few to whom our rights and destinies were committed. When posterity shall ponder on the declaration of July, 1776, and admire, with deep amazement and veneration, the courage and patriotism, the virtue and self-devotion, of the deed, they will find the name of CLYMER there. When the strength and splendour of this empire shall hereafter be displayed in the fulness of maturity, and the future politician shall look at that scheme of government by which the whole resources of a nation have been thus brought into action; by which power has been maintained, and liberty not overthrown; by which the people have been governed and directed, but not enslaved or oppressed;—they will find that CLYMER was one of the fathers of the country from whose wisdom and experience the system emanated.*

* Hopkinson's Address Acad. Fine Arts. March 8, 1813.

BENJAMIN RUSH.



BENJAMIN RUSH

Engraved by J.B.Longacre from a

Painting by Sully.

RUSH.

Benjamin Rush was born in the township of Berberry, about twelve miles to the north east of Philadelphia, on the twenty-fourth of December, 1745. His great-grandfather, who was a native of England, had served with some credit in the army of Cromwell as captain of horse, and at the death of the protector emigrated to Pennsylvania, about the time of its first settlement by William Penn. No other account of his parentage has been preserved that merits a particular notice. The usual occupations of an infant colony afford neither allurements to vice, nor very frequent opportunities of distinction.

He lost his father at six years of age, and with a younger brother was thrown entirely under the care of his mother. Her vigilance and activity appear, however, to have amply compensated his early deprivation, or to have left at least no reason

of interest to deplore it. Her sensibility, quickened by a consciousness of the abandonment of her children, certainly procured for them many advantages that even the joint efforts of their parents had never accomplished. In the lives of great men, both of ancient and modern times, it may indeed be remarked, that no small portion of them have been raised into distinction under similar circumstances—under the tuition and protection of woman; which fact ought to lead us to a more intimate sense of the obligations due to this portion of our species. As from the breasts of our mothers we receive those first elements of physical vigor, which no cares of paternity can supply us, so from their lips we inhale those first principles of good, and those incentives of greatness, which the sterner features and blunter feelings of our fathers are rarely sufficient to inculcate.

At her husband's decease, the widowed mother of young Rush meditated the means of procuring him a liberal education; but the limited resources of their farm being inadequate to the purpose, she removed to the city of Philadelphia, and there entering into some commercial business, was enabled by prudent management and rigid economy to succeed in her generous undertaking. Having taught him herself the elements of the English language,

she sent him at the age of nine years to the grammar school of Nottingham, in Maryland, at that time under the direction of her sister's husband, the Rev. Dr. Findley, who afterwards became president of the college of Princeton in New Jersey.

This gentleman was not only well versed in the business of teaching, but was distinguished for extraordinary piety; and from a family regard towards his pupil, was inclined to superintend his morals and studies with more than common attention. On the other hand his scholar, secure in the retirement of country life from the intimacy of rakes and idlers, being of a generous nature and good faculties, and instigated besides by the affectionate anxiety of his mother, is said to have advanced in learning far beyond the ordinary proficiency of his age, and to have acquired that love of order and emulation of study, which distinguished him through the residue of his life. "Such was the force of the example and pious principles, which he received at this time," says his friend and eulogist, Dr. Ramsay, "that though he spent nearly all the remainder of his youth in Edinburgh, London, and Paris, exposed to every temptation inseparable from such great cities, yet he returned at the age of twenty-four years to his native country, with the same in-

nocence of morals, which he brought with him from Nottingham, the scene of his boyish years."

Having finished his preparatory course of the dead languages, he was removed, at the age of fourteen, to Princeton college, then under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Davies, much lauded in his days for great piety and masterly eloquence. He completed his collegiate studies, in this seminary, in the month of September, 1766, and received a degree of Bachelor of Arts, according to the usual fashion of our country, at about sixteen years of age.

In determining upon a scheme of future life, the narrowness of his fortune suffered no long deliberation. His inclinations, it is said, first led him to the profession of the law, in which the natural direction of his faculties, and especially his ready talent of eloquence, seemed to afford a sufficient presage of success. His ambition would have no doubt led him, in this pursuit, to the most distinguished and important employments of the state. This design, they say, was counteracted by the persuasions of the Rev. Dr. Findley, who, for reasons not related, induced him to attempt the profession of medicine. This resolution taken, he commenced his study in Philadelphia, under Dr. Redman, a physician of the first eminence, who

not only superintended carefully his preparatory studies, but encouraged afterwards the first essays of his practice with a constant and generous patronage.

On this, as on other occasions, he insured the particular attention of his teachers by his unexampled application to study. He relates himself, that during the whole of the six years of his pupilage under Dr. Redman, he could enumerate not more than two days of interruption from business; an example, which, to many who are now treading upon the footsteps of this illustrious model, may furnish a theme of salutary reflection. It is indeed but an additional illustration of a rule without exception, that no man can become wise and distinguished but by the combined influence of genius and industry. Many strange tales have indeed been told, to flatter pride or excuse indolence, of eminent and great men who have obtained their laurels without labour, and with the same probability we might add the history of others who have acquired agility of limbs without exercise, or muscular strength without nutriment.

The books which he read with predilection during his preparatory studies were the writings of Hypocrates, Sydenham, and Boerhaave. In addition to his reading he attended a course of public

lectures on medicine by Dr. Shippen, the first that were delivered in the British colonies. He began about this time to accumulate such occurrences and observations as appeared to him worthy of being preserved, in a common-place book; a source from which he afterwards drew much useful information, in the course of his medical practice and lectures, and to which he referred, at the age of fifty years, as exhibiting the only record existing of the malignant fever of Philadelphia of 1762.

In 1766, having passed through the elementary grades of medicine with such opportunities as his country afforded him, and aspiring to still greater advantages, he paid a visit to the medical college of Edinburgh, at that time the most noted school of all Europe, where after two years attendance upon the public lectures and hospitals, he obtained the degree of Doctor of Medicine. On this occasion his Thesis, *de coctione ciborum*, according to the usage of the place, was presented and defended in the Latin language. Its stile of composition is said to be correct and elegant, and the reasonings which he employed in support of his theory, to display abilities which were rare amongst the pupils even of that celebrated school. From the latter part of this proposition there appears no cause of dissent. The experiments also which he made in proof of

his arguments were extremely bold and adventurous; but the acquisition of an elegant and correct Latin stile by a graduate of sixteen, pursuing afterwards the exclusive studies of his art, passes somewhat the bounds of credibility. These academical dignities are, indeed, in all countries to be admitted with distrust, and in distributing the merits to which such productions are entitled, we may affix, at least to three-fourths of them, this brief inscription from Ovid: *Quæ non fecimus ipsi, vix ea nostra voco.*

During his residence at Edinburgh, Dr. Rush was commissioned to negotiate with Dr. Witherspoon of Paisley, in Scotland, his acceptance of the presidency of Princeton college; an office, to which being appointed by the trustees, he had already declined, and it is wholly to the address of Dr. Rush that the accomplishment of this event is ascribed; an event which procured him an invaluable friend throughout life, conferred honour upon the seminary to which he owed his instruction, and contributed in no small degree to the advancement of the literature and science of our country.

From Edinburgh Dr. Rush visited London, and passed there the winter of 1768, in attendance upon the hospitals and medical lectures of that metropolis. The succeeding summer, he spent with great

advantage in Paris, and returned in the autumn of 1769 to his native country.

Thus qualified, he fixed his residence in the city of Philadelphia, and entered upon the career of his profession; in which he had to encounter, at the outset, a competition with physicians of a long established reputation. We find him, however, even in the first years of his practice, associated with such men as Drs. Shippen, Morgan, Bond and Kuhn, as professor in the medical college of Philadelphia; sustaining with them a successful rivalry, and assisting, in the occurrence of the most intricate and dangerous diseases, at their professional consultations.

To a judgment prepared by a far more various knowledge than was usual among his cotemporary physicians, he added most of those shining qualities and exterior accomplishments, which bring out the more solid advantages into conspicuous and prominent relief; and of these advantages of nature, he appears not to have been negligent; for by the affability of his manners and polite conversation, he was very soon considered in Philadelphia the ornament and delight of all the companies he frequented, and was regarded, especially among the ladies, who are the great trumpeters of a physician's merits, with extreme partiality and admiration; all which,

contributed greatly to his professional reputation, and affluence of practice. By the same conciliating arts he gained also the good will of his fellow practitioners, who favoured by friendly offices, rather than obstructed the success of his enterprises. This good Dr. Rush had acquired from his extensive acquaintance with strangers, in addition to other advantages, to respect other men's opinions and to set a proper estimate upon his own abilities; an advantage not usually possessed by men of learning, who have been deprived of similar opportunities.

But that which is said more especially to have influenced the public opinion in his favour, was the affectionate and disinterested zeal, which, on all occasions, he manifested for the welfare of his patients; soothing their apprehensions, or cheering their spirits with sprightly conversation; and visiting with indiscriminate attention the palace of opulence and the hut of poverty. He, indeed, who limits the qualifications of the physician to scientific knowledge or technical experience, entertains no very enlarged notions of the art, and has much yet to learn of the common nature of his species. Almost every man's experience must have taught him, at some period of his life, the influence of mind upon the strength and operations of the body; he must have felt that scarcely less relief from the agony of

disease, is afforded from the affectionate humanity of the physician, than from the application of his most potent medicines, and that death is not to be affrighted from his couch by ghostly counsels, or by an ominous and woeful physiognomy.

But notwithstanding this gentleness of manner, Dr. Rush was not the less distinguished for boldness and intrepidity of experiment. "His mildness to his patients," says one of his biographers, "was in no case extended to the diseases he had to combat. To these he was stern, inexorable and deadly." But the example, in this instance, especially where the same learning and genius do not concur, ought perhaps to be recommended with some hesitation. In a science so precarious as that of medicine, health, we believe, is much less endangered by excessive caution than by headlong precipitation. Youth is, of itself, for the most part, sufficiently adventurous, and physicians are, by their professional habits, probably not led to entertain too tender feelings of the lives of their fellow creatures.

The prosperous course of Dr. Rush's practice was not interrupted by any memorable event, or diversified by any adventure very worthy of relation, until the breaking out of the yellow fever in Philadelphia in 1793, which exhibits the most busy

scene of his professional life, and one in which he acquired his most conspicuous reputation.

This disease had appeared in Philadelphia in 1762, and now returned after a lapse of twenty-three years, with unexampled malignity. War and famine have seldom presented a scene of more complicated horror. It endured about one hundred days, commencing in July and subsiding towards the beginning of September; during which time nearly the whole city was exhausted of its inhabitants, who had either fallen victims to the disease or had fled from their infectious dwellings; the rich to the adjacent country, and a promiscuous multitude of the poor to tents prepared for them in the vicinage of the city. The number who died in this short period was about four thousand five hundred; and the condition of the diseased was often attended by circumstances of distress the most deplorable. Indeed, whatever has been ever recorded of human misery, or even what poetic fancy has ever imagined, appears to have been exhibited, on this occasion, in its most horrid reality.

The city itself presented every where the image of desolation. For nearly two months scarcely an individual was seen upon the streets, unless engaged in some melancholy office; seeking aid for the sick, or conducting the dead to their place of inter-

ment; and no other sound but that of the hearse or the vehicle of the physician, interrupted the frightful solitude. Even the interstices of the pavements are said to have been occupied by grass and weeds. In a populous city, where men are accustomed to witness the bustle of multitudes and activities of business, the absence of such objects necessarily fills the mind with the most painful or melancholy sensations.

The magnanimous conduct of Dr. Rush in this emergency, his devotion to his profession, and total disregard of personal safety, have entitled him to the unceasing gratitude and admiration of his countrymen. To use the words of the celebrated Zimmerman, "Sa conduite a merité que non seulment la ville de Philadelphie, mais que l'humanité entiere lui eleve une statue."

During the fiercest rage of the disease, nearly all the physicians disappeared from the city; either having sought safety by flight into the country, or having perished in the indiscriminate mortality. At one time, when not less than six thousand persons were prostrate in the disease, three practitioners only remained to supply their necessities. The labours of Rush, in this emergency, were without remission, and he certainly accomplished difficulties, and sustained fatigues, to which

the powers of life, under ordinary excitement, or with ordinary courage, had proved wholly inadequate. From the eighth to the fifteenth of September, he visited and prescribed for about one hundred and twenty patients per day. For several weeks his house, at all hours of the day and night, was filled, and sometimes surrounded by multitudes imploring his assistance. To these he prescribed during the intervals of his visits, using the help of three of his pupils, who resided for this purpose in his family; employing them either in putting up medicine, in bleeding, or in visiting the sick. But although he devoted even the hurried periods of his meals to such offices, he was unable to supply the numerous applications that were made to him, and great numbers were obliged every day to retire, without the benefit of his advice or prescriptions; a circumstance which often placed him in an unhappy predicament; being obliged to turn a deaf ear to the most pathetic entreaties, urged with all the zeal of friendship, of conjugal, filial or parental affection; and even when riding through the streets, to drive with such speed as might secure him from interruption, or place him beyond the cries of his wretched petitioners.

By these unremitted labours for the relief of others, his own health was at one time overpower-

ed, and his life for a while despaired of; he was, however, by the timely application of remedies, restored; and, with his usual assiduity, he returned to his practice. On this occasion he was urged by his friends to leave the city, and no longer place his safety in such imminent hazard. To their solicitations and urgent importunities he replied, "that he thought it his duty to sacrifice not only his pleasures and repose, but his life, should it be necessary, for the safety of his patients."

In their attempts to cure this disease, the physicians universally confessed the inefficacy of the usual remedies, and a great diversity of opinions soon arose concerning its nature and treatment. Dr. Rush first employed the gentle purges used in the yellow fever of 1762, for which he soon after substituted ipecacuanha, with bark and other tonics. He used afterwards blisters, or attempted to rouse the system by wrapping the body in blankets dipped in warm vinegar. He also endeavoured, by rubbing the right side with mercury, to excite the action of the vessels through the medium of the liver; all which remedies proved equally unserviceable. He likewise consulted the practice of the West Indies, and following the best instructions he could receive, applied the cold bath; this, in some cases, gave relief, but the other remedies most ap-

proved in that country, he found hurtful, or wholly ineffectual.

For the course of treatment which he soon afterwards so successfully adopted, he is said to have been indebted to the following circumstance. In consulting the various writers upon the prevailing epidemic, he fell accidentally upon an old manuscript, relating to the yellow fever of 1747, in Virginia, written by a Dr. Mitchel, of that province, and presented to him by Dr. Franklin. It contained the following remarks: "An evacuation by purges is more necessary in this than in most other fevers, and an ill-timed scrupulousness about the weakness of the body, is of bad consequence in these urgent circumstances; I can affirm that I have given a purge in this case, when the pulse has been so low that it could hardly be felt, and the debility extreme, yet both the one and the other have been restored by it." Upon this single sentence Dr. Rush laid the foundations of his subsequent practice; for the history of which, we may refer to the excellent eulogium pronounced by his friend Dr. Ramsay, which contains a minute and authentic detail of it.

The methods he employed, though attended by the most manifest evidence of their utility, were much disapproved and questioned by many of his

cotemporaries. Besides prescribing larger doses than usual of calomel, he recommended and followed bleeding in a great variety of cases, in which this remedy, by other physicians, was not accredited; and, although the quantity of blood taken was not without precedent, it exceeded, in various instances, the received opinions relating to it. The natural horror which all men feel at the effusion of blood, encouraged prejudices against him, and gave easy circulation to the slanders of his enemies. Most of the physicians, and at length the whole community, were enlisted in the quarrel. The public journals were converted into vehicles of abuse, and pamphlets were written against him, in a style remarkable for its malice and scurrility. He was even stigmatized, in these writings, as a murderer; and at one time was threatened with prosecution and expulsion from the city; and to such a height of petulance was the dispute at last carried, as to require a resort to legal authority.

Thus Dr. Rush paid his contingent to the necessary contribution upon all human greatness. For such recompense he had employed his affectionate services upon his fellow citizens in their utmost distress; sacrificed his repose, and hazarded his life amidst dangers at which even the cheek of the warrior had blenched. The quarrels of physicians,

more than of other men, are said to be fierce and implacable, and on this occasion the remark seems to have been sufficiently verified; at least we do not recollect any private dispute in this city which has spread more extensively, or risen to so high a degree of rancour and animosity: there were some indeed who acted as principals in it, who had not even the excuse of professional jealousy to justify their termagant hostility, and whose motives we are at a loss to penetrate. To discover the impulse of malice in animal nature is, however, not always practicable. Good actions and good feelings, are not usually without motive, but villanies are often practised from instinct. The whelp fawns upon the hand that feeds him, but the viper stings without provocation.

The enemies of Rush succeeded for some years in injuring his professional reputation and in circumscribing his extensive practice. But it is the advantage of true merit to be eternal and suffer but temporary obscuration. The traces of their enmity are now invisible, whilst the honour of his profession and glory of his country are associated with the name of Rush. The experience of the present day has sufficiently proved that his deviation from established rules was not founded upon any levity of determination, or presumptuous confidence in his

abilities; for even those who were loudest in their censure of his practice have at last united in the general strain of approbation.

As he was endowed with an inquisitive spirit, and as the fortunes of his life placed his various faculties in a state of almost continual exercise and improvement, we may suppose that nearly all the distempers which afflict humanity, fell under his frequent care and attention; and that in all he was qualified to extend the greatest efficacy of his art to palliate or relieve them. There are a few, however, noticed by his historians, for which he was more especially distinguished. His greatest reputation, they say, was acquired by the treatment of fevers and diseases of the lungs. The remedies which he has recommended in the latter, are simple and their utility manifest. He is said to have performed himself many memorable cures, and to have been the author of various improvements.

As a teacher of medicine Dr. Rush has acquired not less distinction than as a practitioner. The various duties he fulfilled in this capacity, both excited his mind to research, and diffused his name and principles extensively throughout the country. His private pupils were very numerous from the commencement of his practice. In the nine last years they amounted to fifty. His pupils in class

during the first seasons of his public lectures, varied from sixteen to thirty. From 1789, they increased rapidly, and in 1812 amounted to four hundred and thirty. It is estimated that during his life he had given instruction to more than two thousand pupils, who propagated his principles and practice of medicine throughout the whole of the United States, and in some instances to South America, the West Indies and Europe. His degrees of appointment, as appears from the journals of the university, were as follows:

In 1769, he was chosen professor of chemistry in the college of Philadelphia.

In 1789, he succeeded, in the same institution to the chair of the theory and practice of medicine, vacated by the death of Dr. Morgan.

In 1791, the college having merged into the university of Pennsylvania, he was elected in this latter establishment, professor of the institutes of medicine and of clinical practice.

In 1796, he received the additional professorship, on the resignation of Dr. Khun, of the practice of physic, which he held with the two preceding appointments, though they required much laborious application, until the close of his life. Besides these various duties, he was for many years one of the physicians of the Pennsylvania hospital and contri-

buted very essentially to the interest of that institution.

The style and manner in which he conveyed his public lectures have been greatly admired; and those who have had the best opportunities to judge do not hesitate to rank him as one of the most popular lecturers of his age. "His traits of physiognomy," says one who witnessed the latter years of his life, "and his general demeanor inspire the greatest deference and respect: and time, which has bared his brow and silvered his remaining locks, has not yet quenched the fire of his imagination. His eye sparkles with the scintillations of genius, and his voice varies to all the notes of the human passions, from the most resolute sternness to the mildest expressions of friendship and benignity. The stories and anecdotes which long experience and a retentive memory have furnished him, and with which he often illustrates his medical doctrines, he relates with inimitable felicity, and the whole of his audience, though many of them from dissipated habits or deficient education are little sensible to either moral or intellectual beauty, listen to him with the greatest curiosity and attention."

This talent of eloquence, in the profession of Dr. Rush, is not usually estimated according to its importance; because men seldom reflect upon the

force of example upon the sentiments and dispositions of our nature. Genius as well as stupidity is contagious; and the business of teaching others is therefore never safely consigned to persons of rude exterior, hesitating speech, or deficient taste and imagination. The province of a teacher is not only to enlighten the reason of his pupil, but to render him emulous of learning, of honourable sentiments, and of the address and polite manners of a gentleman. The spirit of enterprise which has distinguished the science of medicine since the death of Rush, in this country, is certainly in a great measure to be ascribed to the potent charms of his eloquence. His example and his lectures stirred up a spirit of emulation amongst his pupils, which has raised many of them to the highest wealth and honours of their profession, and has reflected a lustre upon the medical character of our country.

To his fame as a practitioner and teacher of medicine, Dr. Rush has added the no less glorious distinction of a good writer. His works which have yet been printed are comprised in seven volumes, and, with the exception of one containing miscellaneous essays of philosophy, morals, and literature, are wholly employed upon subjects of medicine. Upon these volumes we do not feel our competence

to speculate: they are said, by those who are conversant in the kind of learning of which they treat, to be of incalculable value, for general information, and especially for the particular knowledge, which they convey, of our climate and its peculiar diseases, which is not to be found in books imported from foreign countries. His stile of writing is always attractive, and bears every where the impressions of his genius. He appears not to have studied critical accuracy, but to have chosen such images and expressions as first presented themselves to his imagination. His writings, especially those on medicine, are of too high an order of excellence to suffer from any partial defects of composition. There is always in the stile of men of genius an originality which preserves their works with a thousand inaccuracies, whilst all the rules of rhetoric, in the writings of ordinary thinkers, are insufficient to rescue their magnificent poverty of intellect from oblivion. "It is a matter of wonder," says Dr. Ramsay, "how a physician who had so many patients to attend, a professor who had so many pupils to instruct, could find leisure to write so much, and at the same time so well." As a writer his biographers mention this peculiarity, that in composing he never sought retirement or silence, but wrote on the contrary with greater spirit amidst the

intrusion of his friends, and clamorous merriment of his children.

In the volume of miscellaneous writings, to which we have alluded, there are several essays of much interest, on religion, politics and education. There are some also of which the doctrine is not thought unexceptionable. That in which he labours to prove the inutility of the dead languages as a branch of liberal education, has been often, and we think very justly, censured. His opinions upon this subject are not new, but are presented in a very ingenious and persuasive manner, and have done much to depreciate classical learning in America; they flatter our interests, and soothe our indolence, and will therefore be listened to with prone and easy condescension; but our example in the career of letters, has yet furnished no practical illustration of their propriety.

The arguments which he has drawn from individual nations, if closely examined, will furnish no conclusive evidence in favour of his doctrine. If he has the Greeks on his side, he has the Romans against him. The latter people, who were not inferior to the former in any department of letters, considered the study of Greek, in their system of polite education, as indispensible, and their most eminent authors were distinguished for an accurate

knowledge of that language. Its study is recommended also by Cicero, Horace, Pliny, and Quinctillian as the very best kind of discipline for early youth; and the reasons, which were sound with regard to them, are much more so in their application to the moderns; our languages bearing towards theirs a much greater analogy. But this study, says Dr. Rush, draws us from the contemplation of nature, and makes us heedless imitators. Those students who confine themselves to their own language are not the less prone on that account to a servile imitation. Demosthenes is said to have transcribed Thucydides eight times, and to have committed the greater part of that author to memory; thinking that he could not better study nature than by imitating those who had best described her appearances and operations. Virgil, not less than Homer, has received the admiration of the world; and, to use the expression of an eminent critic, if formed by Homer, he is the very best of his works. The Greek, it may be observed also, consisted of various dialects, which were almost distinct languages, and these, which were contained in a few scanty volumes, were studied with a rigid discipline and attention, which are not expected amidst the multitude of our modern productions.

The arguments of Dr. Rush, drawn from the effect of the classics upon individuals, are either in their favour, or resolve themselves into nothing. Studies of no kind will confer reason upon madmen, or wisdom upon fools. But a small portion of mankind are fitted for the occupation of letters. The greater mass are designed for more humble, though perhaps not less useful, pursuits, and to teach them Greek or Latin would indeed be a misapplication of their faculties. Queen Elizabeth was instructed in the dead languages with special care, and joined also a familiar acquaintance with all those of modern Europe; yet we cannot perceive that this occasioned with her any deficiency in the science of government, or "in the knowledge of men and things." In her successor, we have an example not only of the inutility of Latin and Greek, but of every other species of instruction, when employed upon feeble or incompetent faculties. The same aliments, which give bloom and vigour to the healthful temperament, must oppress when the digestive powers are puny and emasculated.

Dr. Rush's opinion that the study of words retards our proficiency in the knowledge of things, corresponds not well with his usual discernment in tracing our mental operations. It is at variance

with the best authorities, and seems to have been formed without due consideration of the subject.

His opinion that the learning and genius of the ancients may be transmitted to us by translation, is by no means indisputable. In reply we may only ask, what would be the fate of Shakspeare, or Milton, or even of Addison, if consigned to a German or French translation? Even the beauties of Spenser or Montaigne are not to be recovered by any modern dress from the obsolete language in which they were composed.

The cultivation of Greek and Latin is further stated by Dr. Rush to be an impediment to the perfection of our mother tongue. "It is to the neglect of them," he observes, "that the late improvements in our language may be reasonably ascribed." It is, however, undeniable that those who have most improved our language were pre-eminent for their knowledge of Latin and Greek. In the acquisition of these latter languages, from the peculiar nature of their construction, the student proceeds by a continual process of reasoning; he is forced to examine each sentence with critical accuracy, and to consider words in all their various relations; which, added to the knowledge he acquires of etymology in his native language, must be considered as no inconsiderable advantage. In our own tongue, which

is learned by rote, no such application is common or necessary. Foreign language affords also a means of comparison, and the Latin, by its inverted construction, is best suited to such a purpose. It is difficulty which sharpens the skill, and comparison that imparts to the mind taste and discrimination; and in what regards the highest excellence of language, dignity of thought, or elegance of composition, it is acknowledged, that the best models of imitation are found amongst the writings of antiquity: living languages are also exposed to caprice and inconstancy; these are no longer subject to variation; nothing is rendered vulgar by common use, and nothing mean or obsolete by time.

In the actual condition of the world we are not only to consider what kind of learning may best improve the human faculties, but also what is sanctioned by the reigning habits and exigencies of society. The Latin and Greek have now become, by allusions and quotations, so incorporated with modern literature, as to render a knowledge of them, independent of other considerations, a matter of indispensible necessity. Those who are ignorant of the imitations or classical allusions found in modern languages, will understand but very imperfectly some of their most exquisite beauties.

The same remarks may be extended to the study of the ancient Mythology, upon which Dr. Rush has likewise animadverted with great vehemence. This system of religion, though the offspring of error and ignorance, has been rendered, by the embellishments of genius, and by custom, an inseparable part of polite education. The licentious tales interwoven with it, might indeed, in a state of negative innocence, prove dangerous to morals, but in the actual condition of society, an exclusive knowledge of good has been rendered scarcely desirable, or at least altogether impracticable. In a literary point of view, there are few scholars who would wish these specious follies banished from the region of letters. They have furnished not only materials of speculation to philosophers, but to poets and orators, some of the most pleasing allusions, and splendid images of their writings.

Those who labour to decry classical education, never omit to bewail, in pathetic strains, the vexations it imposes upon youth, and to rail at schoolmasters. Such writers, if their pity be any thing else than affectation, may indeed be praised for their humanity, but are certainly not to be commended for their knowledge of human nature. Their reasonings can have no other effect than to render us dissatisfied with labour which is both es-

sential to our happiness, and necessary to all human excellence.

We have been particular in noticing this part of Dr. Rush's writings, from a knowledge of the evil it has produced upon our system of public instruction. In the state of which he was a native, education holds a course extremely devious and irregular, and to his authority we may justly ascribe, in a great measure, its degenerate establishments. It is yet usual to cite his name in relation to this subject, as a decisive argument, and many persons, under the influence of his opinions, leaving their children's faculties almost wholly unimproved, thrust them into professional pursuits without adequate preparation; or at least without any of that studious application which is required to fit men for the serious and useful business of life.

Men of ardent imaginations are, not unfrequently, from a love of paradox, or the heroic ambition of appearing in opposition to the received opinions of mankind, led into reasonings wholly different from their serious and deliberate sentiments. Dr. Rush took care that a classical education should be given to his own sons, and his own example has happily furnished no corroboration of his precepts and arguments.

In all matters of education he appears to have entertained too great a partiality for compendious methods. Men who are in the possession of knowledge almost always form an erroneous estimate of the application necessary in its acquisition. From his eagerness to simplify the science of medicine, he declares that three years are sufficient for others to attain those acquirements upon which he employed himself nine years of unremitting and laborious study. A profession involving so many important considerations, and connected with so many auxiliary branches of science, ought not to be attempted with superficial accomplishments. Much less evil at least is to be apprehended from the excess of a contrary doctrine; especially in this new country, where experience has not yet taught us the fallacy of mountebank pretensions, and where men of noted ignorance or disordered intellects are often in higher repute than philosophers, and are supposed not less fitted to scrutinize the subtile operations of the human body.

The political character of Dr. Rush, which we are now to consider, was in the estimation of his cotemporaries highly respectable. He was united in sentiments and affections with nearly all the distinguished patriots of the revolution. He mixed in the most important councils of the nation, and

his talents as a writer were also faithfully employed in the acquisition of our liberty. He not only wrote himself, but inspired other men, of equal talents and more leisure, with the same spirit. He was amongst the first acquaintances of Thomas Paine, and is said to have instigated, planned and assisted the first compositions of that eminent writer. He was chosen in July 1776, a representative to the general congress, and pursuant to a rule of the house subscribed his name to the Declaration of Independence, which had been ratified some time previous to his appointment. Independence was the favourite theme upon which, during the whole war, he dedicated all his faculties, and from the extent of his influence, we cannot estimate at a low rate, his instrumentality in the accomplishment of that glorious and splendid enterprise.

In 1777, he was appointed, for the middle department, physician general of the military hospitals, and in 1780, a member of the convention from Pennsylvania for the adoption of the federal constitution. Although politics, after the revolution, were but a secondary object in the scheme of his life, he found himself pretty deeply absorbed in the altercations which immediately succeeded it, and exerted himself with a rational vehemence for the interests of whatever party he thought it his duty to

espouse. These events are, however, attended by no memorable consequence connected with his name, and may be dismissed without particular attention.

He lived long enough to be cured of many visions of greatness and felicity, which he had built up for this country upon the base of her republican institutions, and to learn that mankind are not susceptible of all that degree of wisdom, which he and many others of his countrymen, in the ardor of patriotic feeling, had been led to anticipate. In a letter to Dr. Ramsay in 1798, he says, "I believe all power whether hereditary or elective will always fail of producing order and happiness in the hands of man. He alone who created and redeemed man is qualified to govern him."

After the establishment of the federal government he withdrew himself altogether from public life, and devoted the residue of his time to his social duties and the exercise of his profession. The only office he accepted, as a reward for his many services, and which he held for fourteen years, was that of president of the mint; a charge which added something to his revenues without interfering, in any way, with his professional occupations.

As a private citizen he encouraged many useful institutions, and held many places of honour and

confidence. He was president of the American society for the abolition of slavery, and for some time of the Philadelphia Medical Society; he was also vice president of the Philadelphia Bible Society; one of the vice presidents of the American Philosophical Society, and was a member of many other similar institutions both in this country and Europe.

He instituted, in the year 1786, the Philadelphia Dispensary; the good example of which was speedily imitated in Boston, New York, Baltimore, Charleston, and other cities. He was one of the principal agents in founding Dickenson college of Carlisle, and was chiefly instrumental in bringing from Scotland Dr. Nesbit, whose learning bestowed so much dignity and worth upon that institution. In order to give a general diffusion of knowledge throughout the country, he advocated also the establishment of free schools. On this subject he wrote several very sensible and eloquent essays, pointing out, at the same time, the objects which ought to enter into a system of general instruction adapted to the situation of our country, and our republican government. Of the society held chiefly at the house of Dr. Franklin for "Promoting political inquiries," he was one of the most active members, and by dissertations read before that

society, and by pamphlets which he published, he is said to have contributed to the diminution of capital punishments in Pennsylvania; they being abolished by the legislature of 1794, for all crimes except that of murder in the first degree. Believing that all human happiness, and especially when allied with republican institutions, was inseparably connected with virtue, he employed his pen and eloquence in preserving the integrity of the public morals.—This object he strove to promote in all his addresses to his pupils, and in all his public writings, especially those he published on the subject of public instruction.

His inquiry into the effects of ardent spirits upon the body and mind is written with great fervency of mind, and exuberance of genius, and is supposed to have contributed not a little to diminish the vice of drunkenness; a vice of almost universal prevalency in this country; one which, by ruining health, poisons existence, and which has sometimes brought the most hopeful virtues and noblest faculties of the nation to ridicule and dishonour. His essay on this subject he published, that it might be universally read, in form of a pamphlet, and distributed it gratuitously amongst the people, through the medium of the clergy and religious assemblies. He also wrote at the same time against tobacco, and has ex-

hibited a frightful catalogue of the evils arising from the intemperate use of that bewitching stimulus.

In all the periods of his life he was remarkable for his attention to religious duties and his reverence for the holy scriptures. He urges, in all his writings, the excellency of the Christian faith and its happy influence upon the social habits of the country. To his students he especially recommends it as one of the concomitant excellencies and subsidiary accomplishments of the profession. He omitted no possible occasion of attending upon church himself, and considered the observance of the sabbath, even as a civil institution, a most rational policy. On the sabbath he observes not only refection is given to those who are wasted by fatigues, but the idle are diverted from unprofitable or vicious amusements; they not only acquire pious sentiments, but contract those amiable and decorous habits which dignify and adorn private society. When men of conspicuous reputation neglected the ordinances of the sabbath, he considered them very justly as mischievous to the community; for men who impair the honest and decent manners of a state, are not less criminal than they who trample upon its laws and institutions.

This trait in the life of Dr. Rush is the more to be remarked and commended as the religious cha-

racter of physicians, from whatever cause, is not held in very high estimation. The course of instruction necessary to form a medical practitioner, as it is almost wholly conversant with gross animal existence, with transient and perishable nature, must necessarily give a tendency to the mind, unless it be of vigorous and liberal temperament, towards materialism and infidelity; nor is the necessary mode of teaching the medical art, by which great multitudes are collected into populous and corrupt cities, at a time of life when the passions are wild and uncontrollable, calculated to counteract unfavourable impressions.

The useful life of Dr. Rush, whilst yet capable of much good to mankind, was terminated on the nineteenth of April, 1813, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. He had yet experienced no deperdition of mental faculties, and but few physical infirmities. He died of an epidemic, which prevailed at that time in Philadelphia, termed typhus or spotted fever, after a few days' sickness. The spontaneous homage of the people on this occasion affords a decisive and honourable testimony of his eminent merits. His dwelling, during the last days of his illness, was beset by innumerable multitudes, and the prayers of thousands, who had experienced his benevolence or owed their lives to his skill, were

offered to heaven for his recovery. The annunciation of his death threw a general gloom upon the community; the whole city followed him to his grave, with marks of profound grief and affection for his memory. The loss of no individual of this country, with the exception of that of Washington or Franklin, has been lamented with more universal and pathetic demonstrations of sorrow.

In exterior, Dr. Rush was favoured by nature with many advantages. He was above the middle size, of a slender but well proportioned figure, and his general deportment commanded respect and deference. Those who knew him well, and have described him with minute accuracy, tell us that the diameter of his head from back to front was uncommonly large, that he had a prominent forehead, aquiline nose, highly animated blue eyes, with a chin and mouth expressive and comely; his look was fixed, his aspect thoughtful, and the general traits of his physiognomy bespoke strength and activity of intellect.

Throughout life he was ambitious of the affability and polite manners of a gentleman; and for his excellence in such accomplishments his friends have bestowed upon him no ordinary praises. To please in order to instruct was his favourite maxim, and even in old age he retained all the gayety and

attic spirit of conversation which distinguished his early years.

As a scholar, he was well versed in ancient and modern learning, and was fond of poetry and eloquence, with which he relieved the severity of his professional studies, and furnished abundance, and ornament to his stile of conversation and writing. For his reputation, both literary and professional, he was little indebted to any adventitious benefits of fortune. He was endowed with good faculties, a penetrating mind, a ready apprehension, exuberant imagination, and extraordinary memory, and these qualities he improved by a long course of unwearied study and observation.

As a physician he has left upon the age in which he lived the impress of his character and genius. In the minds of his own countrymen he holds an undisputed pre-eminence, and amongst foreign nations it is acknowledged that the fame of Sydenham has been rivalled by the glory of Dr. Rush.

NOTES.

(*a*) General Thomson was by birth an Irishman: he emigrated at an early age to this country, and settled in the vicinity of Carlisle, in the state of Pennsylvania. His intrepidity of character qualified him for a frontier settlement, and he was particularly active and successful in exploring and locating western lands. He was present, as captain of a company, at the destruction of Kittaning, in 1756. For his services on the expedition against this place he received a silver medal from the city of Philadelphia. General Thomson possessed all the characteristics of his nation;—impetuous courage, warmth of friendship, patriotism, and generosity. He had located, about the commencement of the revolutionary war, large tracts of the best land in the present state of Kentucky. It is mentioned, as a traditionary anecdote, that when he went to Richmond to enter these lands, his loyalty was suspected, and the oath of allegiance was tendered to him: he refused the oath, preserved his honour, but lost his lands. His family never obtained an indemnity.

(*b*) "In the revolutionary war, the Delaware regiment was reckoned the most efficient in the continental army." *Ramsay's United States*, Vol. 1, p. 209. This regiment went into active service soon after the commencement of the contest, and served during the whole war. Courting danger wherever it was to be encountered; frequently forming part of a victorious army, but more frequently the companions of their countrymen in the gloom of disaster;—the soldiers of this regiment fought at Trenton and at Princeton, at Brandywine and at Germantown, at Guilford and at Eutaw, until, at length reduced to a handful of brave men, they concluded their services with the war, in the glorius termination of the southern campaign.

(*c*) In a letter to general Washington, dated January 19th, 1778, Mr. Read observes, "Fortune threw some cloths in our way, lately, that will be sufficient for more than our battalion consists of at present, if you do not order otherwise. They were taken out of a schooner deserted by her crew, and afterwards forced on our shore by the ice. Several of our people, as well as

others from Jersey, were busily employed in gutting her, when a detachment of the Delaware battalion, at the request of brigadier Patterson, was sent to take possession of such of her cargo as might be of use to the army.—Cloths and spirits were the only articles on board her.

"A dispute arises between the state and those who saved the goods from the wreck, as to the property.

"I apprehend our battalion should have the preference, as to such of the cloths as suit their uniforms, and, at the request of the field officers, wrote to general Smallwood laying claim to it; but he declined to allow it till he had your directions."

(*d*) An eloquent tribute of praise to the statesmen of Delaware, from the lips of the celebrated John Randolph, was delivered on the floor of congress, on the 22d of January, 1822. He made a few preliminary remarks upon the impossibility of keeping apart power and wealth, which, when separated by any revolution, seek a re-union by a tendency, true as gravitation, and naturally as the sexes. It has been so, said he, from the beginning, male and female created he them, and do what you will, they will get together. He went on to observe, that he looked with some dismay upon the present political prospects he saw before us. He saw the old members of the confederacy about to be put in the back-ground. He could see two of the members of the old family of the good old thirteen states—God bless them!—about to be, he would not say proscribed, but submitted to an operation by which they would be deprived of a moiety of their representatives on this floor: and this, too, in the absence, the necessary absence, of the whole representation of one of these states. The state of Delaware, to which he alluded, had produced many illustrious men, who were eminently useful during the revolutionary war, both in the cabinet and the field. For himself, he was disposed to pay all that deference to which she was entitled by her gallantry, ability, and, if he might so express himself, her weakness; a weakness, however, not in nerve, not in the arm nor in the head, but a weakness in numbers, when compared with the magnitude of other states.

Debates House Representatives.

END OF VOL. IV.

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